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THIRTEENTH CENTURY CRUSADER ICONS ON MOUNT SINAI

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Owing to an uninterrupted history from its foundation by the Emperor Justinian until the present day, St. Catherine's monastery on Mount Sinai harbors within its walls the most outstanding collection of icons known today, not only in terms of numbers (there are more than two thousand), but also of age (the earliest date from the sixth century) and quality. Yet this collection is not a cross-section of Greek icon painting in which one might expect all aspects to be equally well represented. The collection intimately reflects the vicissitudes of this holy site which belonged to all Christendom and therefore comprises gifts of icons of many styles from many lands in often uneven proportions. There are certain gaps, e.g. within the Constantinopolitan icons from times when connections with the capital of the Byzantine empire were disrupted, while at the same time a new orientation led to a rapprochement with the Latin West during the period of the Crusader kingdom. A close cultural and artistic interrelationship between the East and the West resulted, which also affected icon painting, as I shall try to demonstrate in this preliminary study.

The great importance of the Sinai icon collection was fully recognized by the Russian bishop Porphyrius Ouspensky who, in the middle of the nineteenth century, took a considerable number of valuable icons to Kiev[1] where most of them were later identified by Kondakov.[2] Yet, during the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, the relative inaccessibility of Sinai was responsible for an almost complete lack of investigation of Sinaitic icon painting, although a general interest in icons as such had been reawakened, particularly by Russian scholars.[3] Among the few visitors to Mount Sinai interested in the icons, the most prominent were again two Russians. One was Kondakov, who visited the monastery in 1881,[4] the other Beneševič, who visited it in 1911,[5] although the latter was even more interested in the manuscripts. Only after George and Maria Sotiriou published an extensive selection of the Sinai icons[6] a few years ago did Byzantine scholarship in general become aware of the key position which the Sinai collection will occupy in future studies of the history of icon painting. Since then, a new expedition, organized by the Universities of Michigan, Princeton, and Alexandria,[7] has set as its goal the more extensive documentary publication of the artistic monuments of St. Catherine's, including the icons. Before the first volume on the icons goes to press, it seems advisable to publish a few preliminary articles.[8]

1. *Second Journey of the Archimandrite Porphyrius Ouspensky to the Sinai Monastery in the year 1850* [in Russian], pp. 144ff.

2. N. Kondakov, *Icons from Sinai and Athos of the Collection of the Most Eminent Porphyrius* [in Russian], St. Petersburg, 1902.

3. Most noteworthy is the great collection of material in the monumental publication of N. P. Likhachev, *Materials for the History of Russian Icon Painting* [in Russian], 2 vols., St. Petersburg, 1906.

4. N. P. Kondakov, *Journey to Sinai in the Year 1881* [in Russian], Odessa, 1882.

5. V. N. Beneševič, *Monumenta Sinaitica Archaeologica et Palaeographica*, Fasc. 1 [in Russian], Leningrad, 1925.

6. G. and M. Sotiriou, *Icones du Mount Sinaï*, Vol. I (plates); Vol. II (text) Athens, 1956 and 1958.

7. During the two campaigns in 1958 and 1960, in which Prof. Forsyth represented the University of Michigan as Field Director, I, myself, Princeton University as Editor-in-Chief of the Publication, and Prof. Fikry the University of Alexandria, a photographic record as complete as possible was made. All photographs of Sinai icons published in this article were taken by this expedition and my personal thanks are due to the photographers, Mr. Fred Anderegg, Mrs. Grace Durfee, and Mr. Walter Grunder.

8. A first study by the author appeared under the title: "The Mandylion and Constantine Porphyrogenetos," *Cahiers Archéol.* XI, 1960, pp. 163ff.

The present study centers on a group of thirteenth century icons[9] which, as will soon become apparent, throw a new light on the relationship between the East and the West. It is not my intention in the present context to treat this rather large group *in extenso* but to select a few characteristic examples in the hope that their publication may stimulate some interest in this new chapter of icon painting.

As the point of departure I have chosen the center of an icon which depicts the Crucifixion (Fig. 1)[10] in what, by the Middle Byzantine period, had developed into its canonical rendering, Christ on the cross being flanked by Mary and John while all other bystanders are eliminated. Though the figure of Christ is rather conventional, the gestures of Mary and John are quite individualized: the Virgin touches the corner of her mouth with her thumb, while John is fingering his nose with his little finger. These gestures are almost a trademark of the numerous Crucifixion scenes painted in the atelier which produced our icon. Above the arms of the cross two flying angels, inscribed as Michael and Gabriel, show their sorrow over the dead Christ, so restrained in the case of Mary and John, without inhibition: bracing their bodies, both are weeping violently and covering their faces, the one with his bare hands, the other with the end of his mantle. The high emotional pitch in these angels would suffice to indicate that this icon, despite its otherwise purely Byzantine iconography, was not designed by a Byzantine painter, but by a Westerner. In panel painting the characteristic gestures of Mary and John occur similarly in a Crucifixion, one of several Passion scenes, on the wing of a triptych in the Gallery of Perugia,[11] which is considered to be North Umbrian, ca. 1275-1285. Yet Christ is depicted here on a forked cross and fastened with three nails, while the Christ on the Sinai icon has the traditional four nails and reflects a somewhat earlier type in other respects as well.

Despite these clear connections with Western art, our icon is apparently not a Western import. The frame, in strictly Byzantine fashion, is filled with a series of busts of saints which in program[12] and style are much closer to a Byzantine model than one would expect in an Italian Dugento panel. Besides, the inscriptions are Greek. On the other hand, the lettering is very unsure, and to separate the $\overline{\text{IC}}$ from $\overline{\text{XC}}$ by placing the O BACIΛEVC THC ΔOΞHC in between, seems very odd. These seeming contradictions can, however, be resolved by introducing a further parallel still closer to the icon, although it is not a panel but a miniature. In the Biblioteca Capitolare of the Cathedral of Perugia there is a missal, cod. 6, with a full-page miniature of the Crucifixion (Fig. 2)[13] whose three main figures coincide to an astonishing degree with those of our icon: the type of Christ, the ductus of the folds in the loin cloth, the characteristic gestures of Mary and John and especially their faces with the rolling eyes, which are more pronounced in the miniature than in the panel, although other icons of our group even surpass the miniature in this respect. These two paintings seem to us the products, if not perhaps of the same workshop, at least of the same artistic center. The mourning angels are somewhat different in type but nevertheless show the same emotional expressiveness and merely represent variants within the same mode. The fact that, in the icon, the drapery of the Virgin and also partly that of John are, according to Byzantine fashion, overspun with a fine net of golden highlights, does not militate against the close connection between miniature and icon, because this technique is rather rare in our icon group and the norm is the whitening of highlights as in the miniature. Some slight divergencies can, we

9. With the exception of the three icons used for comparisons (Figs. 8, 20, and 23), which were published by Sotiriou, all the icons here reproduced are unpublished.

10. It measures 37.2 x 26.6 cm.

11. E. Sandberg-Vavalà, *La Croce dipinta italiana*, Verona, 1929, p. 139 and fig. 110; E. B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting*, Florence, 1949, p. 132, No. 348.

12. They consist of the three members of the Deësis, at the top, followed by the pairs of Elijah and Moses, Peter and Paul, George and Theodore, John Chrysostom and Basil, Catherine and Irene, Maximos and Dometios, Paul [of Thebes] and Onouphrios, and in the center of the bottom Symeon Stylites.

13. H. Buchthal, *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Oxford, 1957, pp. xxxii, 48ff., 53, 65f., 78, 95, 97, 107ff., 137, 144f. A colored reproduction of the Crucifixion miniature is to be found in M. Salmi, *Italian Miniatures*, New York, 1954, pl. XXVI.

believe, be interpreted by a chronological difference within a narrow span of time. The use of three nails and the low city wall behind the hill of Golgotha in the miniature are innovations; the icon, in contrast, is somewhat more traditional and therefore perhaps slightly earlier.

It was Hugo Buchthal's important discovery that the Perugia Missal and a whole class of manuscripts grouped around it, in part of high quality and embellished with extensive narrative miniature cycles (e.g. the great Bible of the Arsénal Library in Paris), were written and illustrated by Crusader artists in St. Jean d'Acre for the Cathedral of the Holy Cross. The proof of this thesis rests on the Perugia Missal, whose calendar contains for July 12 the *Dedicatio ecclesie Acconensis*.[14] After the fall of Jerusalem in 1244 Acre had become the new capital of the shrinking Crusader kingdom; and the main scriptorium, which up to this date had produced Latin manuscripts in Jerusalem, was apparently transferred to Acre, where Buchthal convincingly assumes the Perugia Missal to have been made during the third quarter of the thirteenth century. The close analogy between the Perugia miniature and the Sinai icon leads us to believe that the latter, as well as the whole series of icons grouped around it, are also a product of a workshop to be localized in Acre, and since the icon has some features which point to an origin slightly earlier than the miniature, we propose for the former a date around the middle of the thirteenth century.

Where did the artist who painted this Crucifixion icon in Acre come from? Buchthal, on the strength of stylistic relations with a diptych in Chicago[15] which depicts the Virgin Enthroned and the Crucifixion against a stuccoed background, and which has been attributed to Venice,[16] believes the miniature, too, to be a Venetian work. While we do not believe this entirely impossible, we cannot quite overcome certain doubts. First of all, the comparison between the Perugia miniature and the Crucifixion on the Chicago panel does not seem to us to be quite so compelling, since the characteristic pose of the Virgin, the trademark of the atelier, is missing in the latter; so are the rolling eyes, which are one of the chief characteristics of Buchthal's Acre manuscripts as well as of our icons. Furthermore, scholarship is by no means in agreement about the localization of the Chicago diptych, and Bologna, under Umbrian influence, has also been proposed with powerful arguments.[17] Moreover, an attempt to link the Perugia miniature with the miniature production of Padua and with the workshop of Giovanni Gaibana[18] does not seem to lead to more concrete results, and the last word about the localization of the Perugia Missal has not yet been spoken.

Now, as Buchthal himself has pointed out, the text of the Perugia Missal was written by a French hand, and in the other manuscripts grouped around it an "overwhelming impression of the Bible Moralisée can be felt, two initials of the Perugia Missal with illustrations of the Celebration of the Mass are dependent on contemporary French liturgical manuscripts, and in general in the Acre group the Western elements were predominantly French." No doubt Italian and French elements are combined in his group of manuscripts and, as we shall see, in our whole group of icons as well. The respective share of these two nationalities will thus be one of the main problems in the discussion of the Crusader icons.

Among the rather unique features of the icon collection at Sinai is the survival of a series of iconostasis beams of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[19] Since their length is prescribed by the width of the chapel for which they were designed, they all seem to have been made *ad hoc* for Sinai; and yet the great diversity of styles precludes the possibility that they were all painted at Sinai itself. One of these beams clearly belongs to our group (Figs. 3-4)[20] and shows all the marks of the

14. Buchthal, *op.cit.*, p. xxxii.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 48ff. and pl. 145b.
16. Garrison, *op.cit.*, p. 97, No. 241.
17. E. Sandberg-Vavalà, "A Dugento Diptych in Chicago," *International Studio*, Jan.-Apr. 1930, pp. 32ff.
18. For the latest treatment of this group of manuscripts cf. I. Hänsel, "Die Miniaturmalerei einer Paduaner Schule im Ducento," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft*, II, 1952, p. 129.
19. Sotiriou, *op.cit.*, figs. 87-117.
20. It consists of three wooden boards, the first containing the Annunciation, Nativity, Presentation in the Temple, and Baptism, the second the Metamorphosis, Raising of Lazarus, Entry into Jerusalem, Last Supper, and Crucifixion; and the

mixture of Byzantine and Latin style and iconography. It is an interesting phenomenon that Crusader artists living in Orthodox surroundings not only adopted Byzantine style and iconography with greater intensity than did the painters of the *maniera greca* in Italy, but that they apparently went as far as to adopt the iconostasis and its arrangement of icons according to the more or less fixed program that had developed for the Orthodox service. The core of representations on the iconostasis beam is the liturgical cycle of the twelve great feasts, beginning with the Annunciation and ending with the Koimesis. A feature shared by several beams is the placing of a thirteenth panel in the center depicting the Deësis,[21] and if this addition is not sufficient, two more feasts from the life of the Virgin may be added at the beginning: her Birth and her Presentation in the Temple.[22] Our beam shows a different expansion beyond the twelve feasts: the Last Supper, correctly placed between the Entry into Jerusalem and the Crucifixion. In Byzantine art the Last Supper has great liturgical significance, being usually grouped together with the Washing of the Feet, as these two events are the readings *τοῦ νιπτῆρος* for Maundy Thursday, but they are not part of the great feast cycle, and this intrusion may thus be attributed to a Western mind.

The Crucifixion (Fig. 3) immediately reveals the trademarks of our group: the unmistakable gestures and poses of Mary and John and the typical formation and expression of the eyes. Since the background wall is higher than in the Perugia miniature and supplemented by lateral buildings and a balustrade in front of the wall, we are inclined to date the beam slightly later than the first icon, but conceivably still within the third quarter of the thirteenth century. Obviously it is not only by another and rather inferior hand, but, in spite of the close relationship in iconography, by an artist of different training and outlook. These figures are very sturdy and thickset, and the painter is interested in a greater solidity of the bodies. The rather broad hips of the Christ, and the voluminous loincloth, which somewhat disrupts the flowing rhythm of the body outline, aim at a higher degree of realism. Such features we rather associate with Italian art, and in this case the painter could actually have been an Italian. Yet we hasten to say that attempts to distinguish the nationalities of the icon painters may not always be successful, simply because Italian and French artists working side by side and apparently having models from both countries available, gradually developed a style and iconography which, when fused with Byzantine elements, resulted in what one might simply call Crusader art.

The mixture of Western and Eastern elements is ever present. To choose for the individual scenes of a beam the square panel format instead of an arch seems Western; and Western, too, is the framing ornament of golden diamonds and white pearls set against a black ground, a pattern for which we find numerous parallels in Italian panel painting[23] but none in Byzantine art. Byzantine, however, is the custom of tooling either nimbi or merely ornamental disks into the gold ground so as to give the effect of rotating wheels, an ornamental caprice for which there are many parallels among contemporary Greek icons on Sinai.[24] As in the first icon, the Greek inscription H CΓAVPOCHC and $\overline{\text{IC}}$ $\overline{\text{XC}}$ is written by a very unsure hand as if an artist unaccustomed to Greek letters were timidly trying to imitate them.

Yet, in spite of the artist's endeavor to copy a Byzantine model as faithfully as possible, he does not hesitate to put forward Western convictions when an opportunity offers itself. Such is the case in the representation of Pentecost (Fig. 4). The placing of the apostles on a semicircular bench is thoroughly Byzantine, but this compositional scheme is slightly modified in that the two apostles at either end of the row are not placed at the very bottom, but alongside the preceding ones. The effect is that of an attempt to close the group into the approximation of a circle. Since a circular

third the Anastasis, Ascension, Pentecost, and Koimesis. The total length is 2.25 cm., the width 28.9 cm.

21. *Ibid.*, figs. 96, 106, 111, 115.

22. *Ibid.*, figs. 99, 101.

23. E.g. on some Pisan paintings. Cf. E. Carli, *Pittura Medievale Pisana*, Milan, 1958, pl. 11-15, 87-93; Sandberg-Vavalà, *Croce Dipinta*, figs. 100, 143, 389, 395-396, 474.

24. Sotiriou, *op.cit.*, figs. 56, 85, 127, and elsewhere.

arrangement has a tradition in Latin art as early as the Carolingian period,[25] this change, slight as it may be, reveals the artist's awareness of his Western heritage. The most decisive Western element, however, is the placing of Peter in the absolute center of the composition.[26] In Byzantine art Peter invariably shares the center with Paul. Giving Peter priority can only be understood as Roman propaganda.

One of the outstanding icons in our whole group is a rather large and heavy panel, one side of which again shows the Crucifixion (Fig. 5)[27] with all the peculiar iconographic details observed on the preceding two Crucifixion icons. But the design here is much sharper and more linear. One hardly needs to point to the inscription on the cross, which, in contrast to the weak Greek lettering in the previous examples, reads in bold Latin script, *Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judeorum*, in order to prove that this panel was done by a Western artist. Also, the Virgin and John are properly inscribed *Mater Domini* and *Sanctus Johannes*. In this case there cannot even be a doubt concerning the nationality of the painter. The sharp linear design of the herculean body of Christ, the emotional quality of Christ's strained face with the closed eyes, and the particularly expressive contraction of the brows are clearly Italian and, more specifically, reflect a Crucifixus type generally associated with Giunta Pisano,[28] We should like to add, however, that our Crucifixion panel is surely not a work of Giunta, nor necessarily that of a Pisan or even a Tuscan artist. Giunta's style spread quickly to other parts of Italy, including North Umbria, where, as mentioned above (p. 180), we found an iconographic parallel to the characteristic gestures of Mary and John. Moreover, the Crucifixion with three nails is not known in Giunta's oeuvre but does occur in Tuscany around 1260-1265 in a cross of the School of Lucca.[29] The occurrence in Crusader art of the three-nail Crucifixus, rare in Italian Dugento painting but much more frequent in thirteenth century art north of the Alps, supports our observation that the Northern and especially the French influence asserts itself more strongly than the Italian in the Latin Kingdom of Palestine.

Though it is the work of an Italian, our Crucifixion icon could not have been painted in Italy. While striving for expressiveness, none of the three figures has the high emotional pitch which, in Italian crosses by and under the influence of Giunta, brings out the element of human compassion so forcefully. The painter of the Sinai icon, surrounded by Byzantine works, tries to imitate their greater restraint and detachment from the world of reality, although he does not quite attain that degree of aloofness which is achieved in genuine Byzantine works by a greater dematerialization of the human body and the avoidance of pronounced gestures like those of Mary and John in our group of Crusader icons. However, in formal details such as drapery motifs, especially in Christ's loincloth and John's mantle, the artist assimilates his Byzantine model much more faithfully than do Italian painters, who acquired the *maniera greca* by copying in most cases not Byzantine originals, but intermediary works of art, removed from the Byzantine originals in varying degrees.

The ornament is thoroughly Western: the outer frame, composed of small rosettes in squares and executed in stucco, is Western both in form and technique. The inner frame repeats the golden diamonds and white pearls on a black ground such as we saw in the panels of the iconostasis beam already discussed. Moreover, the tooling of the nimbi of the Virgin and John with a rinceau pattern,[30] and even more so the tooling of the entire background with a diamond pattern, including lily-leafed rosettes, is thoroughly Western. It also occurs in the manuscripts of the Acre ateliers,

25. A. Grabar, "Le schéma iconographique de la Pentecôte," *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, II, 1928, pp. 223ff.

26. A few examples, arbitrarily chosen from German thirteenth century miniature painting, may be seen in H. Swarzenski, *Die lateinischen illuminierten Handschriften des 13 Jh. in den Ländern am Rhein, Main und Donau*, Berlin, 1936, pls. 7, 28; 55, 321; 121, 672; 129, 701; 137, 766; 164, 907; 198, 1066.

27. It measures 120.5 x 67 cm.

28. Cf. the Giunta Crosses in Assisi, Bologna, and Pisa: Carli, *op.cit.*, pp. 30ff. and pls. 32-35; Sandberg-Vavalà, *op.cit.*, pp. 672ff.; also R. Longhi, "Giudizio sul Duecento," *Proporzioni*, II, 1948, pp. 12ff. and figs. 1-2.

29. In the Convento delle Oblate in Careggi. Sandberg-Vavalà, *op.cit.*, pp. 710ff. and figs. 455-457; Garrison, *op.cit.*, p. 194, No. 500.

30. The nimbus of Christ, tooled like the others, was at a later time covered by a stamped piece of metal.

especially in the Arsénal Bible.[31] The pattern, incised or painted, is so common in Gothic manuscripts that it is hardly worth quoting examples. Thus, we have before us a product in which Byzantine, Italian, and French elements are merged in a curious manner. They are so thoroughly absorbed that one does not have the impression of an eclectic creation where the various parts are merely added to each other. This Crusader art has a character all its own.

Both sides of the Crucifixion panel are painted, and obviously by the same hand. This in itself is a remarkable phenomenon. It means that more than likely the icon was placed in an iconostasis and that the Crucifixion, because of its resplendent gold ground, probably faced the worshipers in the nave and was the front side, while the reverse, depicting the Anastasis (Fig. 6), with a starry blue sky as the background, faced the priest officiating in the bema. This, then, would suggest that the Latins had adopted from the Orthodox the custom of erecting something like an iconostasis, an idea already implied by the use of an iconostasis beam (Figs. 3-4). It still remains to be investigated by Church historians and liturgists whether the Crusaders in general made use of an actual iconostasis in their service or whether perhaps Sinai provided unusual conditions. On the other hand, giving the Crucifixion priority over the Anastasis, as is indicated by the gold ground, clearly reflects a Western sentiment; in the Orthodox Church the Anastasis, being the accepted theme for the Easter Sunday picture, is unquestionably the greatest of all the feast pictures and would, so to speak, outrank the Crucifixion. Thus in function and setting this two-sided icon is characteristic of the double-faced position of the products of Crusader art, and the same is also true with regard to iconography and style. The Anastasis is not unknown in Italian panel painting, but is extremely rare and occurs only as one of several scenes in a Passion cycle, usually occupying a small area alongside a huge Crucifixus,[32] while in Byzantine art it is depicted either as one of the twelve great feasts or individually on an icon.

In our panel Christ approaches Adam and raises him up in the traditional manner.[33] Eve stands behind Adam, in agreement with Byzantine tradition; but, contrary to Eastern custom, she is not youthful but a haggard old woman with a wrinkled face. The sunken cheeks, the pathetic look in her eyes, and her stooped pose reflect the new realism of Italian Dugento art, which at about the same time—our icon belongs, in our opinion, to the third quarter of the thirteenth century—induced Nicola Pisano, on the pulpit of the Baptistry of Pisa, to represent the prophetess Hannah in Christ's Presentation in the Temple quite similarly, as an old emaciated woman. It must be remembered, however, that the realistic head of the prophetess was not inspired by an observation of nature, but by the old nurse on a Roman Phaedra Sarcophagus in the Camposanto of Pisa.[34]

It is fascinating to trace, within the framework of a thoroughly Byzantine iconography, the interplay between the Byzantine forms, on the one hand, which the artist tries to imitate particularly faithfully in the draperies, though exaggerating their linear quality, and the Western elements on the other. The latter consist partly of slight iconographic modifications, partly of a greater emphasis on realistic detail, and in addition there are features which result from an unfamiliarity with certain Byzantine conventions. Christ holds a cross of a familiar Greek type, but it is jewel-studded and thus more elaborate than the cross in Byzantine representations of the Anastasis. In this way the Western artist has placed particular emphasis on the idea that the deliverance from Hell was due to the life-saving power of the Cross. Naturally, this idea is also inherent in the Byzantine Anastasis, but the chief reason why the Orthodox Church chose the Anastasis, based on the apoc-

31. Buchthal, *op.cit.*, pl. 88c and elsewhere.

32. E.g. the crosses from the Accademia, now in the Uffizi, Florence (Sandberg-Vavalà, *op.cit.*, fig. 276 and pl. 1); Rosano (*ibid.*, fig. 780); Gallery, Siena (*ibid.*, fig. 414); Museo Civico, Pisa (*ibid.*, fig. 434); cf. Garrison, *op.cit.*, Nos. 515, 521, 525, 527.

33. For the various types of the Anastasis, cf. C. R. Morey, *East Christian Paintings in the Freer Collection*, New York, 1914, pp. 45ff., and more recently K. Weitzmann, "Aristocratic Psalter and Lectionary," *Record of the Art Museum, Princeton University*, XIX, 1960, pp. 98ff.

34. G. Swarzenski, *Nicolo Pisano*, Frankfurt, 1926, pp. 16ff. and pls. 7; 20.

ryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, as the great feast picture for Easter, points rather in another direction. First of all, for the Orthodox it is a demonstration of the Chalcedonian dogma of the two natures of Christ, i.e., of the inseparability of the two natures even after Christ's death on the Cross. The artist conveyed this idea pictorially through a strong emphasis on the stigmata, a motif that is so conspicuous in the Anastasis mosaic of Daphni.[35] The stigmata are also seen in our icon, but there they are not quite so conspicuous. The broken and crossed gates of Hell and the chained Satan are thoroughly Byzantine, and the elaboration of the aureole into several layers of pointed and oval forms was developing in Byzantine art at just about this time and proves that our painter used a contemporary Byzantine panel as his model. Yet I am not sure that a Byzantine painter would ever have used a strong pink as a color for the aureole, as did the Italian who painted our icon.

As Adam eagerly steps out of a sarcophagus, we see the sole of his left foot, a realistic detail almost anticipating Caravaggio's St. Matthew. It conveys the impression of a turning movement, contrary to the Byzantine tradition, which shows Adam strictly parallel to the ground in a pose, half kneeling and half moving forward, aptly described by the German term "Knielaufschema." Behind Eve stand John the Baptist, with a processional cross in his left hand, and Abel—bearded and bald in contrast to the youthful type in Byzantine painting[36]—holding a shepherd's crook that resembles the early form of a Latin crozier. By putting such emphasis on these attributes, the Latin artist tries to be more ceremonial than the Byzantine icon painters, who usually place a real shepherd's crook (in the form of an ancient pedum) in the hand of Abel and a scroll in the hand of John the Baptist. In Byzantine art, the bearded King David and the youthful King Solomon wear the richly embroidered long tunic and the imperial chlamys with the tablion; the Western artist here tries to make them even more imperial by adding the loros, whose form, however, is somewhat misunderstood (as is that of the chlamys, which has no tablion and is fastened in front rather than on the shoulder). Moreover, the crowns, consisting of two bands, are much too high. The artist has costume difficulties also with the figure of Aaron, who stands above David and Solomon and holds a horn for the anointing; he repeats the loros pattern under his mantle, thereby trying perhaps to suggest the breastplate of the priest.

All the figures are set in a landscape of purely Byzantine character, marked by cubic, basalt-like rocks, but at the same time they vary from those of Byzantine compositions in that they are squeezed more tightly into the frame. This tendency towards greater ornamentalization, achieved by a greater dependence on the frame, asserts itself also in other details such as the jewel-studding of the cross, the rich embroidery of the garments, the use of stucco for the nimbi, and the depiction of the big golden stars against the blue background.

A product of the same workshop, although by a somewhat weaker hand, is a panel depicting the Virgin enthroned with the Child and flanked by two angels (Fig. 7).[37] The same technique of tooling the nimbi with a rinceau and palmette pattern and the background with a diamond pattern, though of a somewhat simpler kind, establishes the evidence for a close workshop relationship. The stocky proportions, emphasized even more than in the Crucifixion (Fig. 5), the exaggeratedly large, rather fleshy heads with a not very spirited expression in the eyes, the softness in the modeling of the drapery, which lacks precision in design but on the other hand emphasizes the massiveness of the body—all these features are characteristic of a Western artist. There is a certain discrepancy between the pearl-and-bead-studded frame of the throne, which obliterates the spatial relationship between its front and back side, and the tiled floor, whose pattern represents a serious

35. G. Millet, *Le Monastère de Daphni*, Paris, 1899, pp. 90ff. and pl. XVII; G. Diez and O. Demus, *Byzantine mosaics in Greece, Hosios Lucas and Daphni*, Cambridge, Mass., 1931, pp. 69ff. and fig. 100.

36. E.g., in the Anastasis miniature of the lectionary in the treasure of the Great Lavra on Mount Athos. K. Weitzmann, "Das Evangelion im Skevophylakion zu Lawra," *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, VIII, 1936, pp. 87ff. and pl. II, 1.

37. It measures 56.8 x 47.5 cm.

attempt to create the impression of foreshortening in a rather forceful manner. Both elements are un-Byzantine, and a parallel for the perspective tiled floor can be found in Arezzo,[38] in a panel of the Virgin enthroned, formerly attributed to Margaritone but now generally given to Guido da Siena.[39]

The compositional balance of the Sinai panel is determined by the flanking angels, each of whom holds a scepter in one hand and trustingly rests the other on the back of the throne, thus demonstrating a close familiarity with the Virgin. Italian Dugento art also very often shows the Virgin accompanied by angels, although, owing to a preference for taller panels, they are represented in smaller size and arranged above the back of the throne; where the artist does provide space for them alongside the Virgin, he retains their smaller size and superimposes them either standing, as in Cimabue's *Virgin* from Santa Trinita in Florence, or kneeling, as in Duccio's *Madonna Rucellai* from Santa Maria Novella. However, the Musée des Arts Decoratifs in Paris has a panel by the Magdalen Master[40] in which SS. Andrew and James rest their hands on the back of the Virgin's throne in a very similar manner, repeating the poses of our angels. If the flanking angels ever existed in Italian Dugento art (as seems quite possible, though no example is known to me), it surely would have to be explained as an adaptation from a Byzantine model. By chance such a Byzantine panel of the thirteenth century has been preserved in the Sinai Collection (Fig. 8),[41] although it is not likely that, in spite of many similarities in composition and detail, this very panel was the model used by the Crusader artist.

A comparison between these two Virgin icons shows quite clearly that the Crusader artist followed a Byzantine model much more faithfully than a Dugento artist working in Italy would have done. Yet the Western temper asserts itself in many respects in this instance. In the Byzantine panel, the taller proportions and the almost exaggerated use of sharp and metallic-looking highlights over the entire surface, human figures and furniture alike, create a dematerializing effect which immediately removes the Virgin and the angels to an unearthly realm and which is quite in contrast to the earthly quality of the Italian panel. The Byzantine Christ Child holds the scroll in his left hand and blesses with his right, thus being almost self-contained and more spiritually than physically connected with the Virgin. In the Crusader panel the Child clings to the Virgin by holding her right hand as if to steady himself; he looks up at her face and tries to reach it with his other hand. It is true that in the type of the Glycophilousa, Byzantine art also had achieved a somewhat more human relationship between the Mother and Child than in any other type, but even there the human element is more formalized. Baby-like behavior such as holding the Virgin's hand has no place in a Byzantine icon of the Virgin. The fundamental difference of two religious concepts manifests itself here in all clarity, despite the fact that the Western artist tried to copy a Byzantine model as closely as he could.

What makes the Virgin panel all the more interesting is the fact that it forms the center of a triptych with wings, each of which contains two superimposed scenes: Christ among the Doctors (Fig. 10) and the Threnos, i.e., the Lamentation of Christ at the right (Fig. 12), and the Koimesis (Fig. 11) and the Coronation of the Virgin at the left (Fig. 9), while their backs are occupied by the standing figures of John the Baptist and an unidentified bishop.The selection of the four scenes on the inner sides of the wings is rather strange and I do not know of any precise parallel to this program.

38. A. Venturi, *Storia dell'arte Italiana*, v, 1907, pp. 50, 52 and fig. 39; C. H. Weigelt, "Uber die 'Mütterliche' Madonna in der Italienischen Malerei des 13. Jahrh.," *Art Studies*, VI, 1928, p. 200 *passim* and fig. 14; Garrison, *op.cit.*, p. 79, No. 178.

39. This parallel was pointed out to me by Prof. M. Meiss, to whom I wish to express my sincere thanks for having given me the opportunity to discuss with him repeatedly the Italian problems of the present study. Recently he has come to suspect that the tiled floor in the Arezzo panel might be a somewhat later addition. Even so, its existence in the Sinai picture presupposes that at that time this motif must have existed in Italian painting, since it is utterly un-Byzantine in character and can only be explained as an adaptation from a Western model.

40. Garrison, *op.cit.*, p. 142, No. 368.

41. Sotiriou, *op.cit.*, p. 173 and fig. 191.

In Italian art the cycle of smaller scenes that flanks the enthroned Virgin is normally drawn from the lives of Christ and the Virgin, chiefly from the Passion. Thus the Lamentation and the Death of the Virgin occur fairly frequently, but Christ among the Doctors is found only occasionally. As for the Coronation of the Virgin, it occurs, according to our knowledge, only once in Italian panel painting and even then not as part of a series of flanking scenes but in a crowning gable. The choice of these four scenes is neither narrative nor, in the Byzantine sense, liturgical. If we are not mistaken, the meaning of the program is the juxtaposition of the Joys of the Virgin, pictorialized in the upper two scenes, and her Sorrows, shown in the lower two. This clearly reflects Western sentiment and we therefore assume that a Crusader cleric must have laid out this program.

Iconographically, the Byzantine tradition prevails in the two lower scenes, while Christ among the Doctors is composed according to Western concepts and the Coronation is a Western invention. Thus, as may be expected, we will have to look to both East and West in order to account for various iconographical details in these four panels. The general layout of the Lamentation (Fig. 12) is obviously in the tradition of the Byzantine Threnos,[42] in which Christ's body is depicted as stiff in order to express *rigor mortis* and at the same time strangely suspended,[43] while the Virgin is leaning over her dead Son supporting his head and his right arm. However, there is a slight but very essential change in the attitude of the Virgin: while the position of her right leg, in agreement with the Byzantine tradition, indicates a motion to the left as if she were carrying Christ's body toward a rocky tomb—a scene from which the Threnos actually developed—the position of her left leg, which in Byzantine art touches the ground and gives the effect of the "Knielaufschema,"[44] is changed so as to give the impression of a frontal, seated pose. This is a decisive step toward the concept of the Western Pietà. Moreover, in Byzantine art Christ lies on the ground or on a Porphyry slab, the famous relic that was venerated in the Pantocratoros monastery in Constantinople,[45] while the open sarcophagus here has been introduced under the influence of Western entombment scenes—an alteration which leaves the Virgin in a very precarious, almost impossible spatial relationship to the sarcophagus. Behind the Virgin and flanking her are the other two Marys, one weeping and the other throwing up her arms in a gesture of despair. Both types can be derived from Byzantine models and occur in Middle Byzantine miniatures,[46] but there the other Marys stand at a respectful distance from the Virgin, who is leaning over her dead Son; in the Sinai panel they have moved closer together and thus are deeply involved in a more human drama.

The lifting up and the kissing of Christ's left hand are also Byzantine features, but there it is invariably John, the beloved disciple, who is permitted to perform such an act of veneration. In the Sinai panel the substitution of Mary Magdalen is due to the infusion once again of Western mentality. Never in Byzantine art did Mary Magdalen play so important a role in Christ's Passion as in Gothic art and Latin hagiography. This substitution resulted in a chain reaction. John is relegated to a secondary position, bending over Christ's feet. This is the place traditionally occupied by Joseph of Arimathia and Nicodemus who, in turn, are placed behind Mary Magdalen and John. By concentrating the figures more closely around the dead Christ, the element of human compassion receives stronger emphasis; the heavy bleeding of Christ's wound is another expression of this tendency.

The Koimesis (Fig. 11) follows the Byzantine tradition with hardly any changes, since the compositional scheme of the Death of the Virgin generally retained its Eastern aspects throughout Western art with a remarkable tenacity from the Ottonian period on, when the Eastern scheme was

42. K. Weitzmann, "The Origin of the Threnos," *De Artibus Opuscula XL, Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, New York, 1961, pp. 476ff. and pls. 161-166.

43. Cf., e.g., the thirteenth century miniature in the gospel book, London, British Museum, cod. Harley 1810 (*ibid.*, pl. 164, fig. 11).

44. Cf., e.g., the eleventh or twelfth century miniature in the lectionary in the Vatican Library, cod. gr. 1156 (*ibid.*, pl. 166, fig. 16).

45. G. Millet, *Recherches sur l'iconographie de l'Evangile*, Paris, 1916, pp. 498ff.

46. Cf. once more the miniature referred to in note 44.

often copied in Reichenau manuscripts. In our case, even the additional figure of the Hebrew who tried to overthrow the bier follows the Greek version of this apocryphal story.[47] Here his name is Jephonias and he is punished for his crime by an angel who smites his hands, while the Latin version, which does not involve a punishing angel, merely tells us that the hands of the unnamed Hebrew withered—and thus the story is usually depicted in Western art. Wherever, occasionally, the smiting of the hands does occur in Western art, it is to be attributed to the influence of a Byzantine model. The only Westernization in the Sinai panel, as we might expect, is the intensified human expression, not so much perhaps in the figures of the apostles (where Byzantine art had gone quite far in expressing grief and sorrow) as in the figure of Christ, who holds the little soul with a gesture of affection, while normally (though not always) in Byzantine art he lifts up the soul in order to hand it over to the angels swooping down from heaven to receive it.

In the scene of Christ among the Doctors (Fig. 10), the humanizing, i.e., the Western trend, is even more strongly marked. In Byzantine art Christ invariably sits in the Center among the doctors. Sometimes, as in an eleventh century lectionary in Dionysiu on Mount Athos,[48] all the figures sit on a semicircular bench or on steps reminiscent of the presbyter bench in the apse of a Christian church, so that Christ in the center actually takes the place held by a bishop—an arrangement which has its ultimate source in the Disputation of the Seven Wise Men in ancient art.[49] In the Sinai picture all the doctors sit on one side while Christ points them out to his parents standing opposite them. The Dionysiu miniature also depicts Christ's parents to the right of the main group, but they are separated from the main scene by the picture frame which, without the use of architectural features, suggests the separation between interior and exterior, thus giving the effect of the parents waiting outside a closed door. In the Sinai panel, however, the parents are admitted into the assembly room and they appear to be disrupting the disputation, an intrusion which Christ does not seem to mind, as he looks joyfully at his humbly approaching parents. It is significant that the parallels to such a compositional layout are all to be found in Western art, notably in the Bibles Moralisées,[50] i.e., a group of Parisian manuscripts from about the middle of the thirteenth century that are associated with St. Louis.

Even more typically French is the Coronation of the Virgin (Fig. 9). This subject is utterly un-Byzantine, because the admission of the Virgin as a Synthronos would violate the Byzantines' hierarchical concepts. Created in the twelfth century,[51] the earliest example known to us is the apse mosaic in Santa Maria in Trastevere in Rome from around 1140 A.D. It does not exist in Byzantine art and it remains extremely rare even in Italy in spite of its early occurrence there. In Italian panel painting of the Dugento only a single instance has come to light, in the form of the crowning gable to a lost altarpiece attributed to Guido da Siena and now in the Courtauld Institute in London.[52] Yet a comparison between the two pictures immediately reveals that they are stylistically far apart. In the panel attributed to Guido, the bodies of Christ and the Virgin are rendered in heavier proportions which, in spite of the abstracting golden highlights, gives them a greater sense of physical reality compared to the figures of the Sinai panel, which are more slender, less corporeal, and thus more in agreement with Northern Gothic feeling. Indeed, the closest parallels, stylistically

47. M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, Oxford, 1953, p. 208.

48. K. Weitzmann, "The Narrative and Liturgical Gospel Illustrations," *New Testament Manuscript Studies*, ed. by M. M. Parvis and A. P. Wikgren, Chicago, 1950, p. 158 and pl. XVI.

49. For this subject in general cf. G. W. Elderkin, "Two mosaics representing the seven wise men," *American Journal of Archaeology*, XXXIX, 1935, pp. 92ff., and in particular the mosaic from Apamea (G. M. A. Hanfmann, "Socrates and Christ," *Harvard Studies of Classical Philology*, LX, 1951, pp. 206ff. and fig. 1).

50. Cf. British Museum, Cod. Harl. 1527, fol. 14v (A. de Laborde, *La Bible Moralisée Illustrée*, III, Paris, 1913, pl. 485).

51. E. Mâle, *L'Art religieux du XII siècle en France*, Paris, 1922, p. 184.

52. G. Coor-Achenbach, "The Earliest Italian Representation of the Coronation of the Virgin," *Burlington Magazine*, XCIX, 1957, p. 328.

and iconographically, are to be found in French manuscripts, where this theme was quite popular[53] (it also occurs in many English and German manuscripts of that period). In some instances the Coronation is, as in the Sinai panel, placed above the Koimesis, so that in spite of the Byzantine origin of the Dormition iconography, its combination with the Coronation of the Virgin is a Western idea.

A comparison of these four scenes on the wings with the Virgin of the central panel, reveals at once that we are dealing with a totally different style. The differences go far beyond those of master and pupil or two painters of the same workshop or even the same locality, and they cannot be explained merely by differences in temper or individuality. Technical details like that of covering the background with a filigree-like stucco are not decisive elements. We have already mentioned this technique in connection with the Chicago diptych (cf. p. 181),[54] which has been attributed to Venice and is also considered to be Bolognese. However, a stucco background like that on the wings of the Sinai triptych is by no means confined to Italy but is a common feature in the Latin West and can be traced as far as Spain.

The most characteristic feature of all four lateral scenes is the peculiar facial expression, most clearly visible in the Virgin's face: the eyes are wide open, giving the effect of rolling eyeballs, and typical also is the line from the corner of the eye to the temple. So characteristic is this feature that it becomes the trademark of the majority of icons with which we are here concerned; actually, only the two surely Italian examples are to be excepted, i.e., the Crucifixion-Anastasis icon (Figs. 5-6) and the center panel of our triptych (Fig. 7). Buchthal noticed the very same facial feature in the miniatures of some manuscripts which he attributed to a scriptorium in Acre, and he, too, takes this as one of the most conspicuous details which the products of the Acre scriptorium have in common. The key monument is the sumptuous Bible in the Arsénal Library in Paris (cod. 5211), which Buchthal has very convincingly ascribed to an atelier in Acre.[55] He reasons that the occasion for producing such a splendid Bible in Old French was the presence of St. Louis himself in the Holy Land from 1250 to 1254. Only the accessibility of good French models, secured perhaps through the king, and the availability of excellent Byzantine manuscripts explain its mixture of French and Byzantine style and iconography, a mixture of the very same kind that is found in the wings of our triptych. A striking miniature of the Arsénal Bible is the frontispiece to Proverbs (Fig. 13)[56] showing Solomon enthroned and grouped together with a personification that is most probably to be interpreted as Divine Wisdom. One needs only to compare the eyes of this personification with those of the Virgin of the Coronation in order to realize that we are dealing with products of the same local tradition and that, therefore, our triptych is the product of a workshop in Acre and of approximately the same date as the Arsénal Bible, i.e., around the middle of the thirteenth century. We would not even exclude the possibility that both miniatures and icons were actually produced in the very same workshop.

One could even find support for such a conclusion in a strange iconographic detail. Leaning over the arcade in the Solomon miniature are the busts of Christ and the Virgin, whom Buchthal convincingly identifies as the Sponsus and Sponsa of the Song of Songs, although these types of Christ and the Virgin have no formal parallels in Western manuscripts illustrating this poetical book of the Bible. On the other hand, our icon group includes several representations of St. Nicholas, mostly in bust form (Fig. 20), though some are also full-length, all of which have in common the insertion of small busts of Christ and the Virgin in the upper corners. Christ, holding a scroll in his

53. It may suffice to quote just one of many examples approximately contemporary with the Sinai icon: the miniature on fol. 29v of the Psalter of St. Louis and Blanche of Castille in the Arsénal Library, cod. 1186, where the Virgin, however, holds a standard like Ecclesia. Cf. H. Martin, *Les Joyaux de l'Arsénal*, I, Paris, 1909, pl. XXXV.

54. Cf. note 17.

55. Buchthal, *op.cit.*, pp. 54ff. and pls. 62-81.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 63 and pl. 77.

left hand, exactly as in the miniature, offers a jewel-studded Gospel book with his right hand, while the Virgin is presenting the omophorion. These types are so close, and the changes, made only as required by the new context, so slight, that the influence of a Nicholas icon of our group on the Solomon miniature in the Arsénal Bible seems to us more than likely.

The text of the Arsénal Bible is written in Old French; the "biblical figures or scenes," to quote Buchthal, "are for the most part exactly like those found in the same places in contemporary French manuscripts. The ornamental initials, too, are practically indistinguishable from their counterparts in works from metropolitan France. . . . There can be no doubt about the primary training of the illuminator in a French scriptorium, nor about the French pattern of decoration in general." If the connection between the wings of our triptych and the miniatures of the Arsénal Bible is as close as we believe it to be, then it seems more or less self-evident that the former, too, should be considered as products of a French painter working in Acre. Moreover, this conclusion rests not only on style but also on the strong iconographic relationship with other French miniatures, such as those of the Bibles Moralisées, with the focus on those manuscripts which were made for the court of St. Louis. The same relationship can be demonstrated, as we shall see, in some of the following icons and it will repeatedly involve the Arsénal Bible, not only from the stylistic but also from the iconographic point of view. Thus, if we are not mistaken, the great differences in style between the central Madonna of the triptych and the four scenes on the wings, which surpass the normal range within the same workshop tradition, can be reasonably explained as due to the artists' different nationalities, one being Italian and the other French. A Crusader workshop in Acre would provide a plausible setting for such a collaboration.

Of the two different styles of the triptych, the one represented on the wings is far more widespread, and all the icons discussed below (although they are only a selection of the Crusader icons on Sinai) belong to the group which we associate with the French tradition.

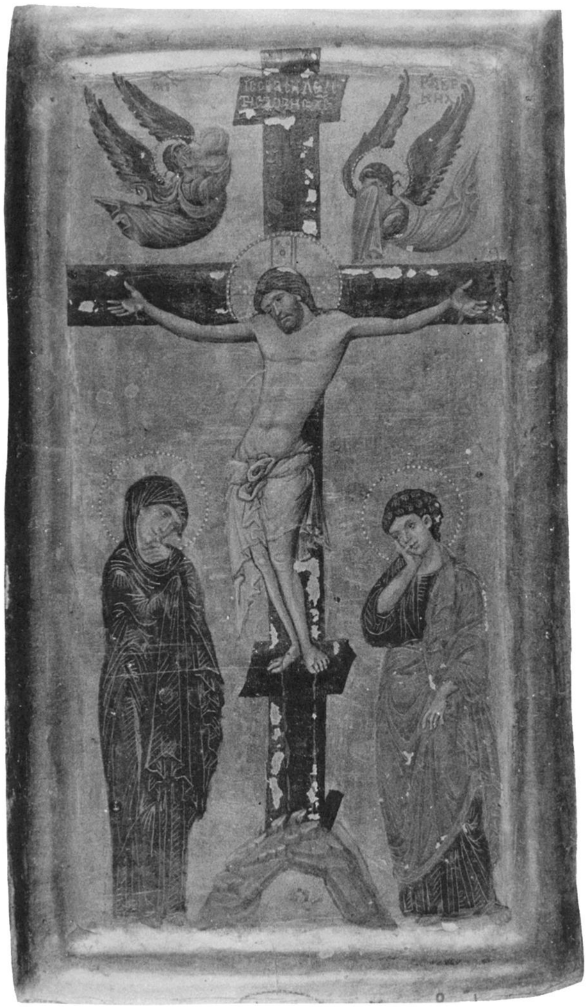
One of them attracts our attention because of its strange choice of scenes and their unusual arrangement (Fig. 15).[57] The panel is divided horizontally and, in the upper strip, vertically as well, the narrower part being devoted to the Virgin and Child Enthroned, the wider one to the Death of Moses, inscribed by an unsure hand Η ΚΙΜΗϹΗϹ ΤΟV ΠΡ[ΟΦΗΤΟV] ΜΩϹΗϹ; the bottom strip, more extensively damaged than the upper by a vertical crack, depicts the Banquet of Herod at the left and John the Baptist in the Desert at the right.[58] What must immediately be felt as unusual and unbalanced is that the Virgin is relegated to the upper left-hand corner instead of being placed in the center. There is, on Sinai, a diptych, as yet unpublished, from the Palaeologan period, in which the Virgin on the right wing occupies the same place, i.e., the upper left-hand corner, while a figure of Christ in the upper right-hand corner of the left wing counterbalances her. In this manner, Christ and the Virgin form a pair in the upper center of the diptych as a whole. Thus it can be surmised that our panel also either actually was, or was meant to be, the right half of a diptych. If this is so, then the problem of explaining the strange choice of subjects becomes all the more difficult, since we would have only half of them preserved.

The Virgin Enthroned follows a Byzantine model very faithfully in every respect, including even the duplication of the cushion. The Byzantine Virgin (cf. Fig. 8)[59] normally supports the Child with her left hand, leaving her right hand free either to steady the Christ Child or to hold him before her breast, while in our icon the position of the hands is reversed. However, this exchange of gestures is merely the result of a copying process through mirror reversal and cannot be considered

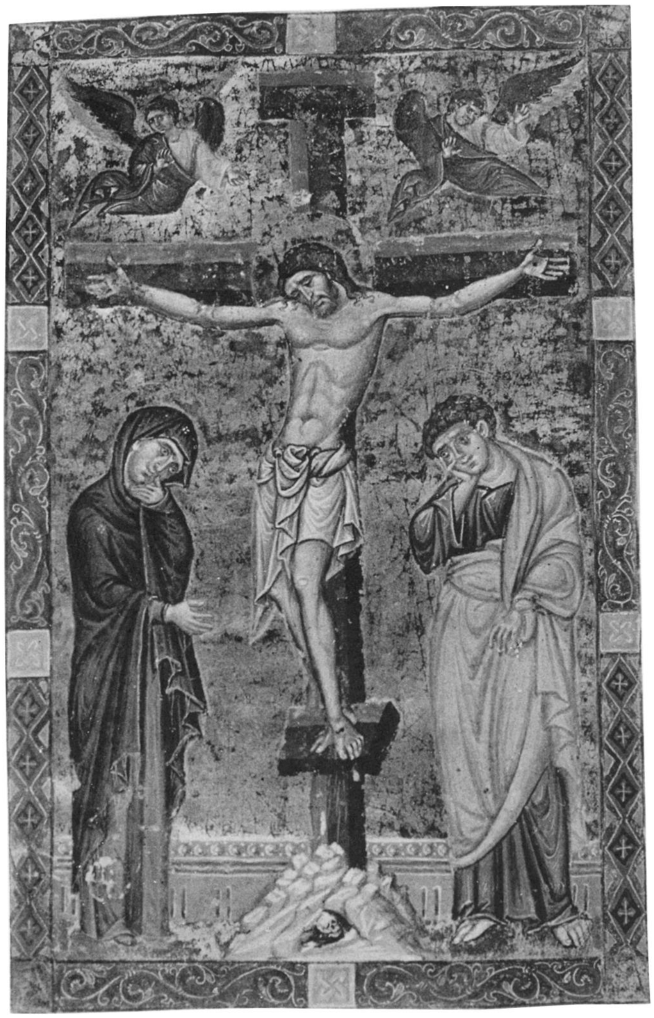
57. It measures 41.9 x 30.9 cm.

58. In spite of the far-reaching destruction between the two lower scenes, it is clear that there was no dividing vertical line between them, because the branches of a central tree, still partly preserved, reach into both picture areas.

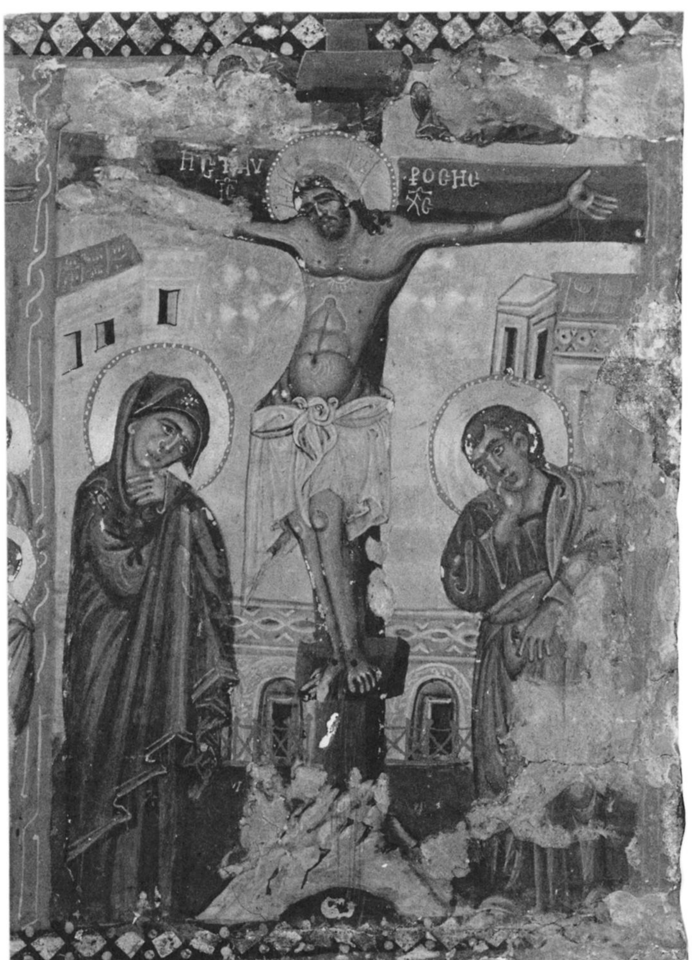
59. Cf. also Sotiriou, *op.cit.*, pls. 171, 222.

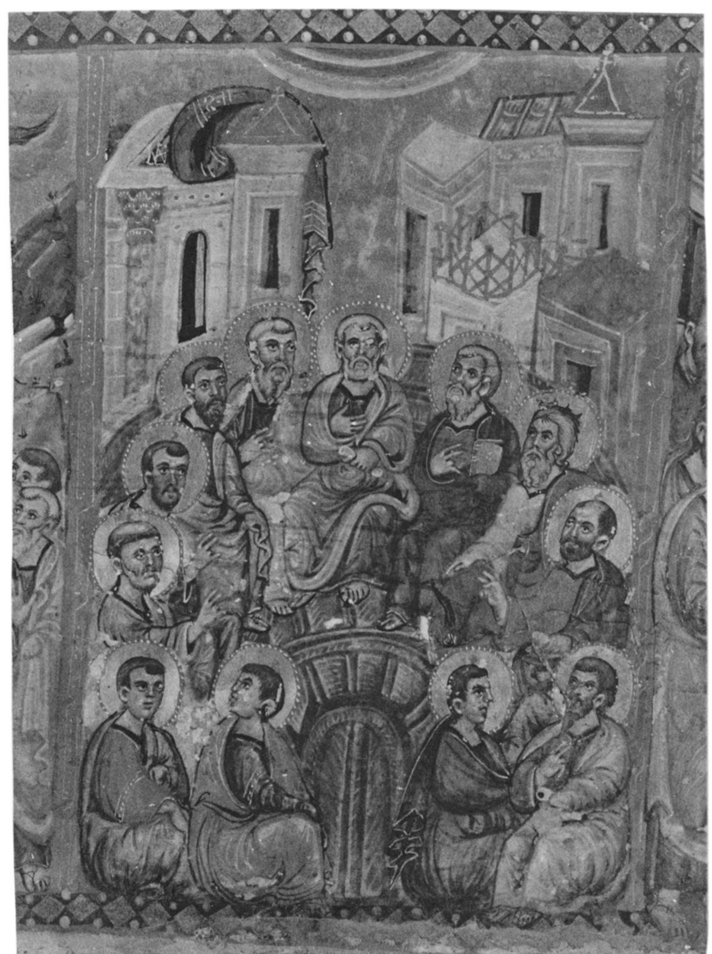


1. Icon, *Crucifixion* (detail). Sinai
(photo: Alexandria-Michigan-Princeton Expedition)



2. *Crucifixion*. Perugia, Bibl. Capitolare 6, Fol. 182v
(Courtesy Hugo Buchthal)



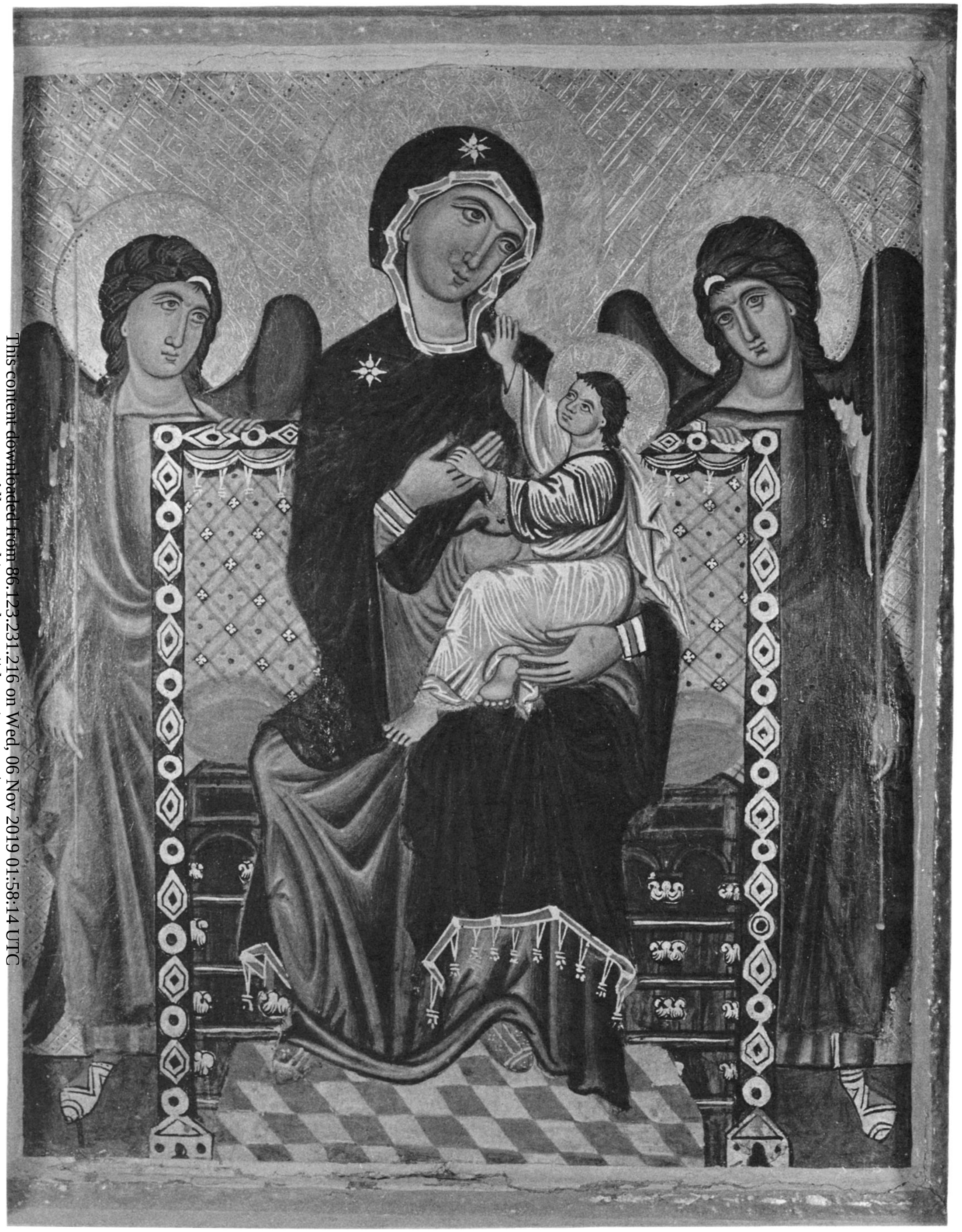


3-4. Iconostasis beam, *Crucifixion and Pentecost* (details). Sinai
(photo: Alexandria-Michigan-Princeton Expedition)

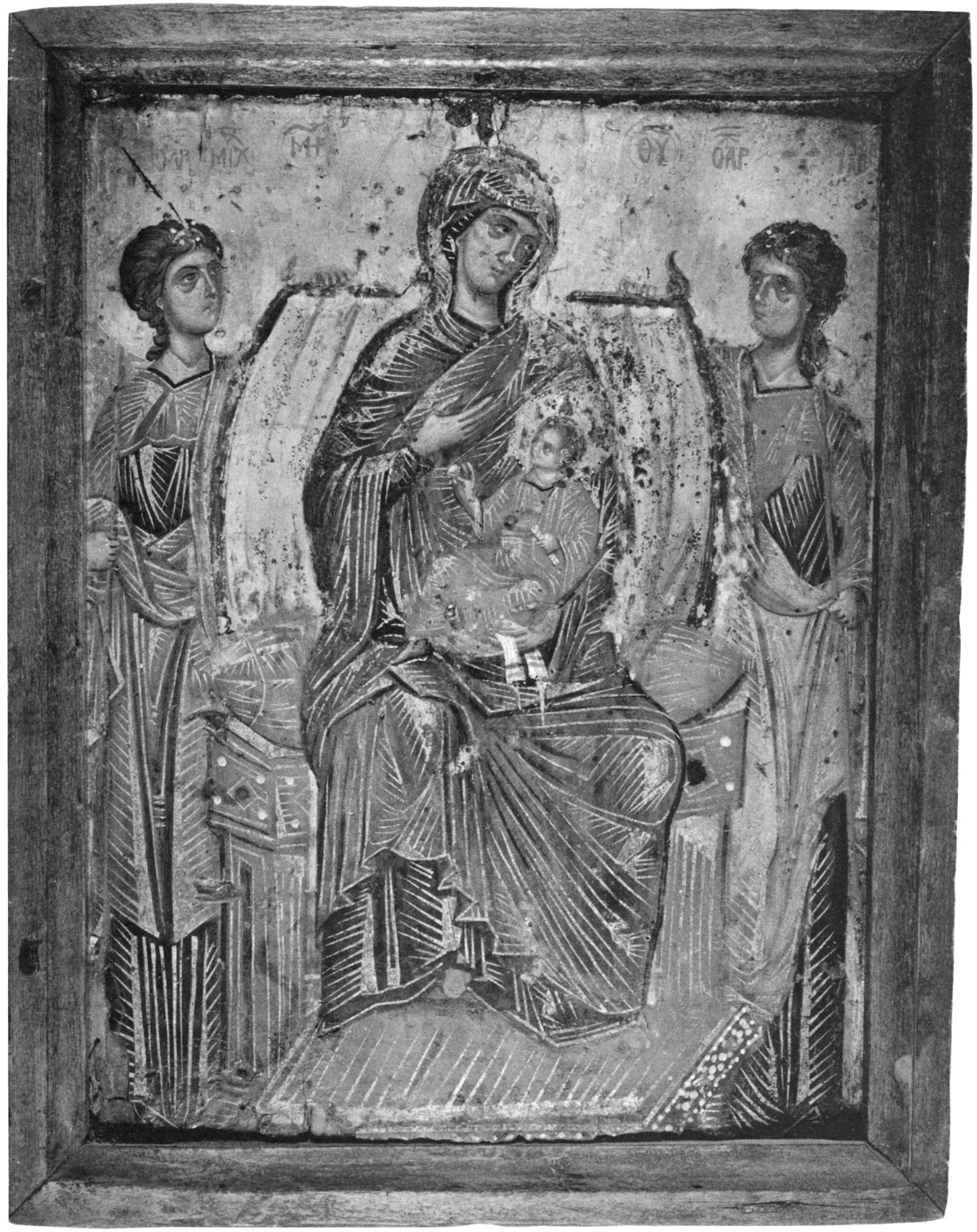




5-6. Icon, *Crucifixion and Anastasis* (front and back) Sinai
(photos: Alexandria-Michigan-Princeton Expedition)

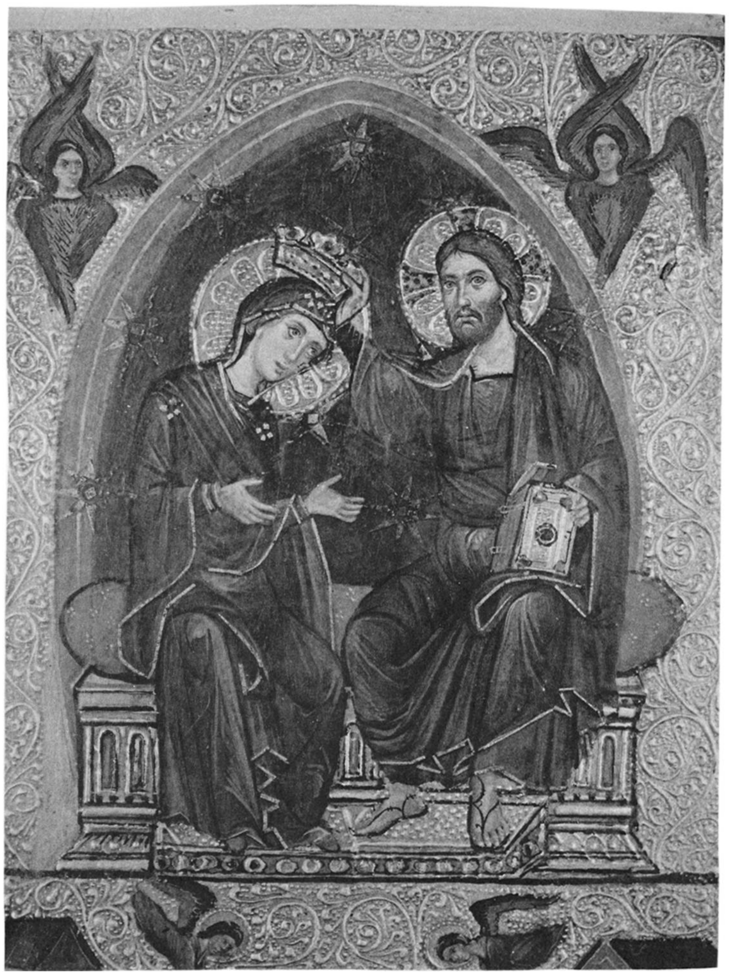


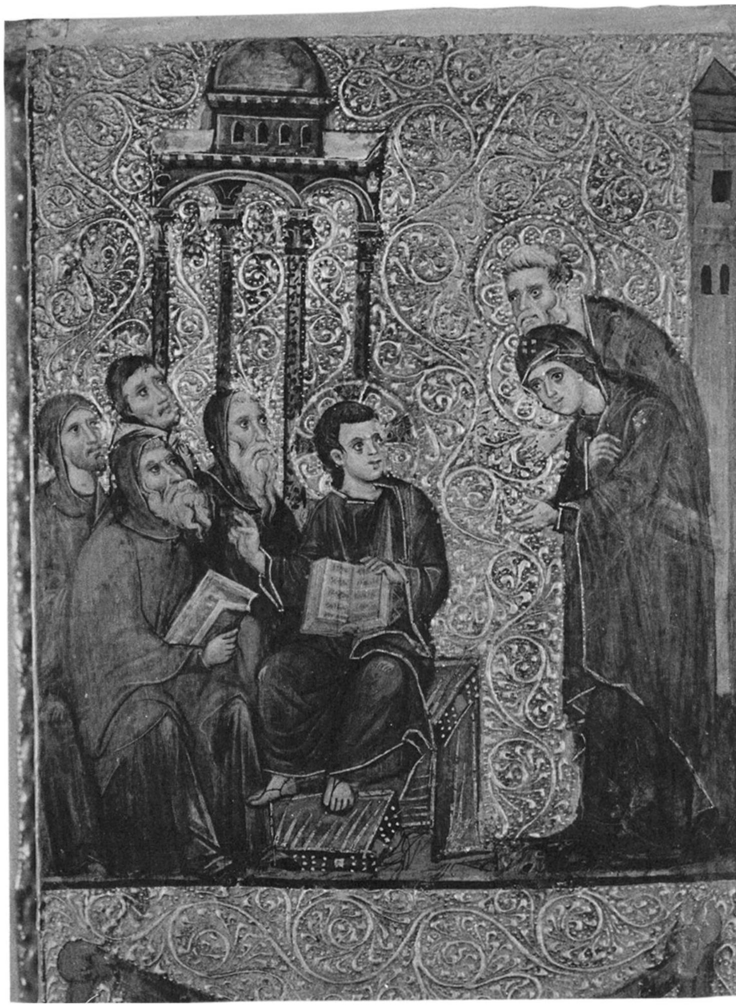
7. Icon, *Virgin Enthroned* (center of triptych). Sinai



8. Icon, *Virgin Enthroned*, Sinai

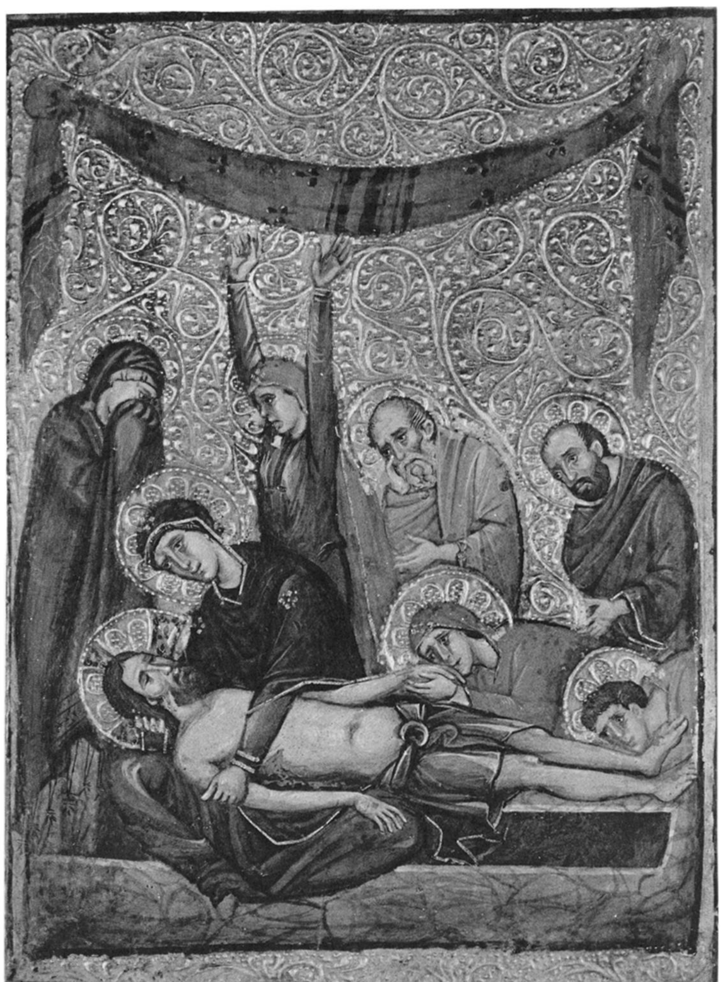
(photos: Alexandria-Michigan-Princeton Expedition)



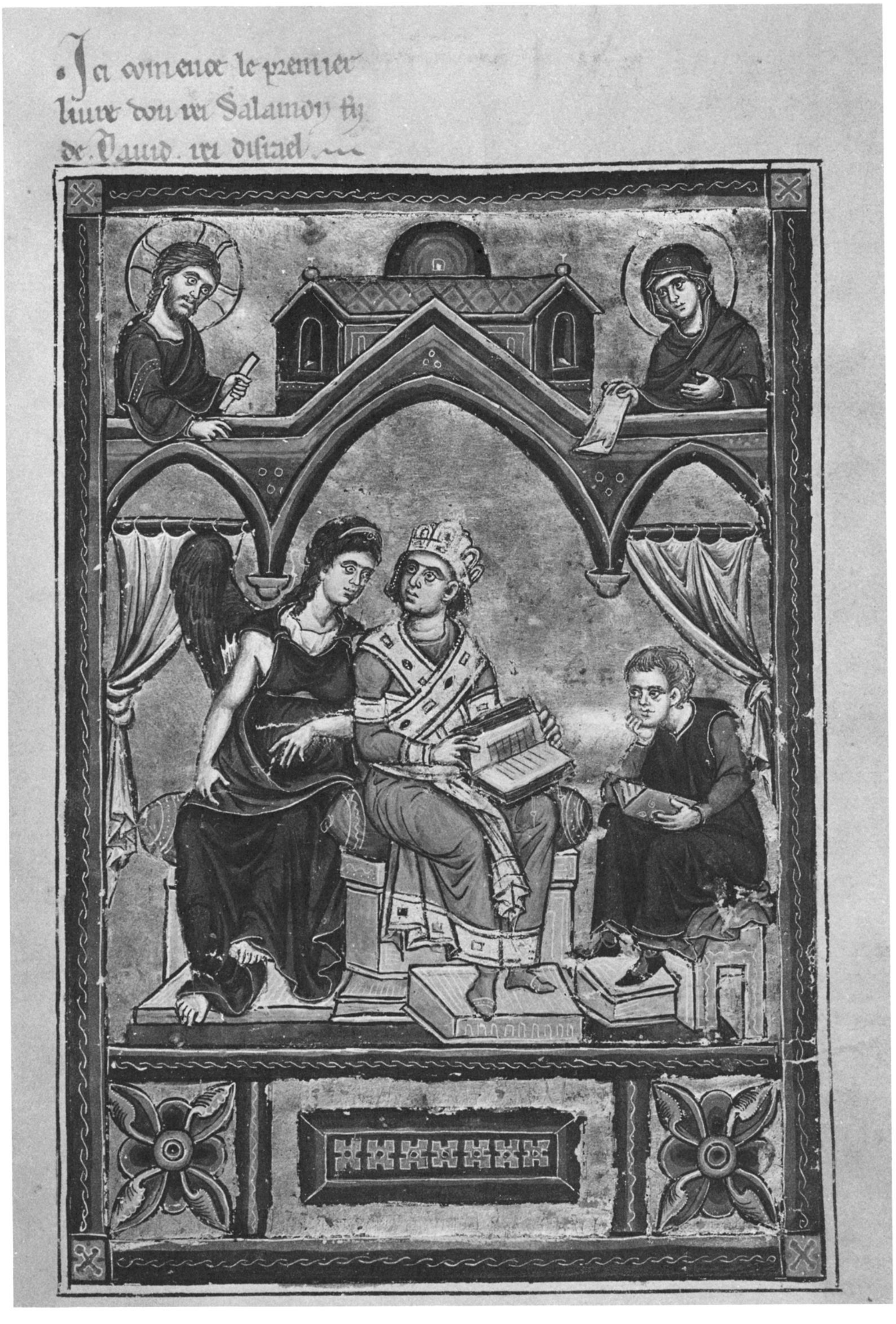


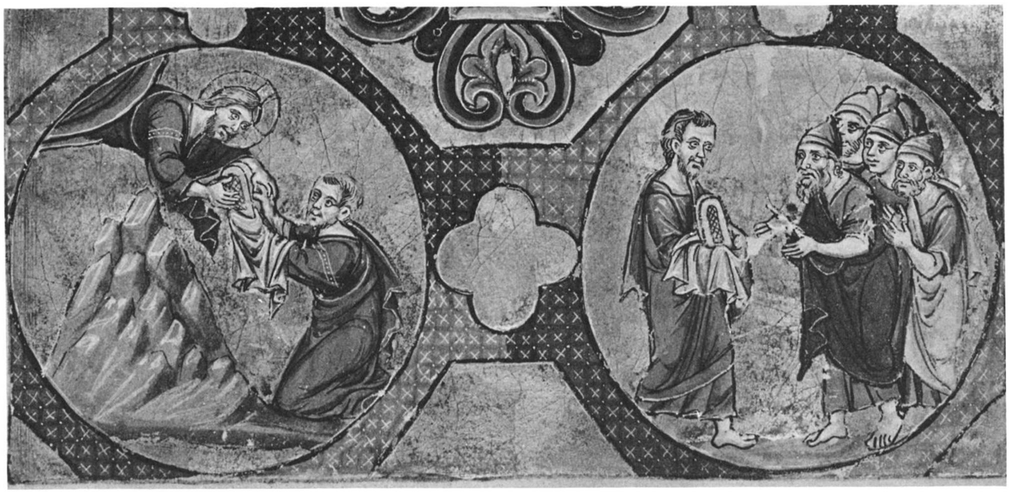
9-10. Icon, *Coronation of Virgin* and *Christ among Doctors* (wings of triptych). Sinai





11-12. Icon, *Koimesis and Threnos* (wings of triptych) Sinai
(photos: Alexandria-Michigan-Princeton Expedition)





13-14. *Solomon and Moses on Sinai*, Paris, Bibl. d'Arsénal cod. 5211, Fols. 307r and 30r (photos: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale)



15. Icon, *Virgin; Death of Moses; John the Baptist.* Sinai (photo: Alexandria-Michigan-Princeton Expedition)



16. Ivory, *Hodegetria* (detail) Paris, Musée de Cluny (photo: Giraudon)



17. Icon, *Virgin with Saints; Moses and Elijah.* Sinai (photo: Alexandria-Michigan-Princeton Expedition)

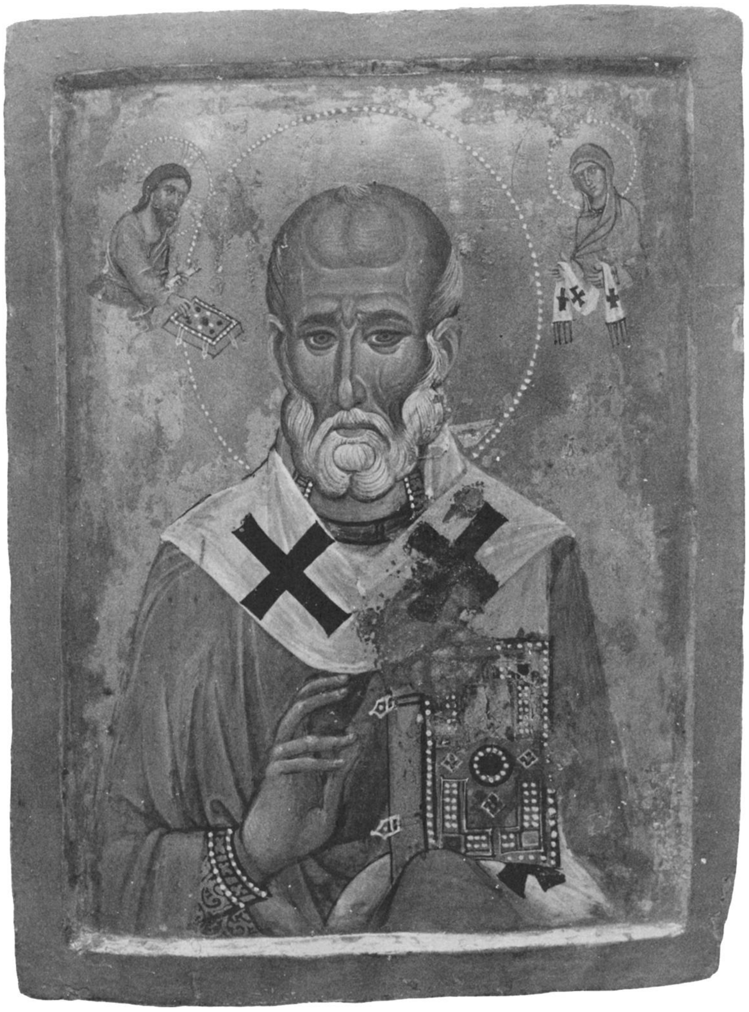


18. Icon, *Deësis and Saints.* Sinai

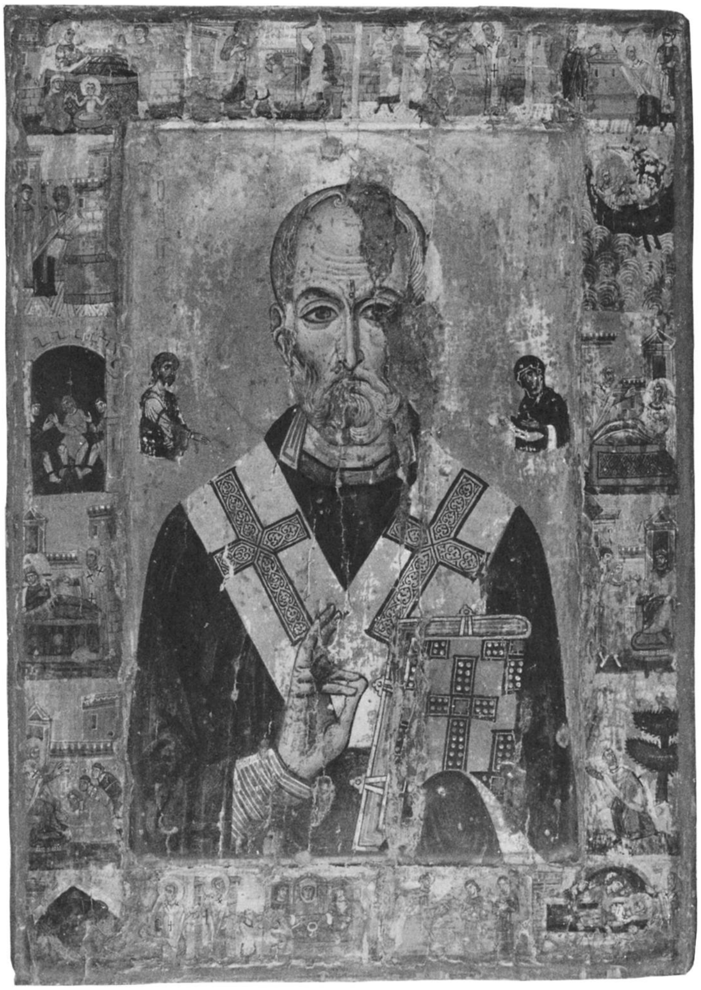


19. Icon. *SS. Theodore and Demetrius.* Sinai

(photos: Alexandria-Michigan-Princeton Expedition)



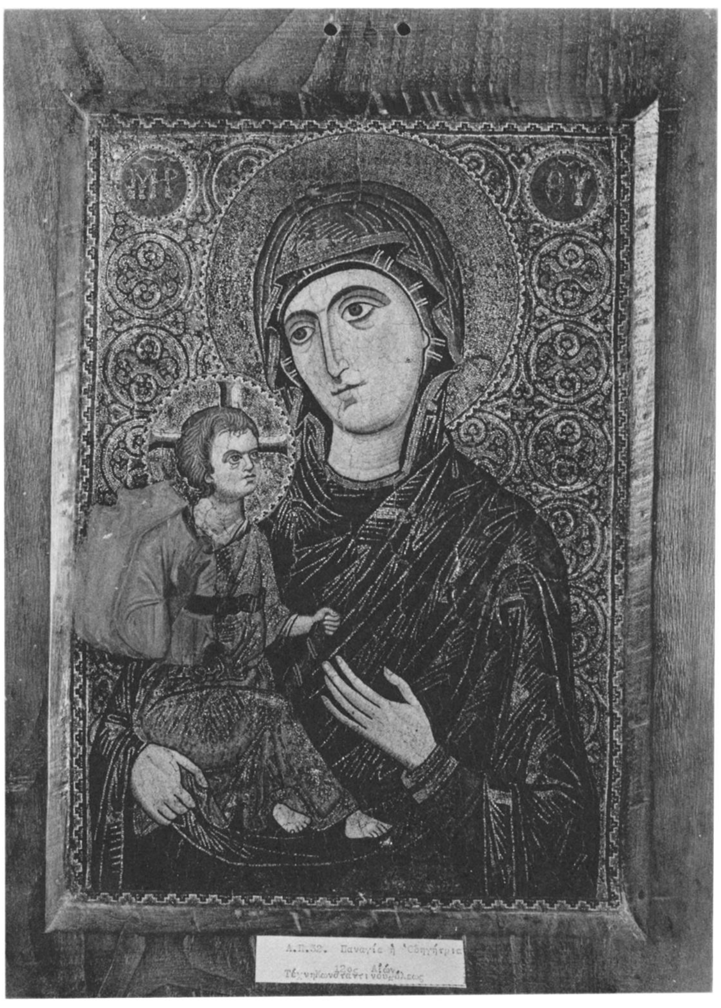
20. Icon, *St. Nicholas.* Sinai



21. Icon, *St. Nicholas with scenes from life.* Sinai



22. Icon, *Hodegetria.* Sinai



23. Mosaic icon, *Hodegetria.* Sinai

a peculiarly Western feature. It can be shown that such reversals had already been made in Byzantine painting of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[60]

Unique in icon painting of this period is the representation of the Death of Moses: four angels are lowering the dead body, wrapped in a shroud, into an open rock tomb. Making the burial of Moses so conspicuous is contrary to the meaning of the Bible text (Deut. 34:5-6), which stresses Moses' disappearance into the mountains, and also to the fact that the location of his sepulcher was never known. This idea is clearly conveyed in the miniatures of the Greek Octateuchs,[61] where the artist, in conformity with the meaning of the text, lets all but the head of Moses disappear behind the mountain peak.[62] In Western art, the actual burial is quite frequently depicted, following various traditions, including the one according to which the Lord Himself buries the prophet.[63] As to the burial by angels, the closest iconographical parallels—as one might have expected—can be found once more in the Bibles Moralisées.[64] On the other hand, no example of such a Moses burial is known to us in Italian art, and thus we are confronted once more with an influence from French manuscripts.

In the lower strip we see the Banquet of Herod, including Salome, who carries the severed head of John the Baptist on a plate over her head; this plate and a part of the arm carrying it are all that remains of this figure. In a typical mixture of Eastern and Western elements, Herod wears what purports to be a Byzantine crown with the pendulia, while at the same time he is dressed in a Western coat trimmed with ermine. At the right, on a different scale, John the Baptist is depicted in the desert carrying an open scroll in one hand, on which one reads the familiar HΔE O AMNOC TOV ΘV O EIPON [THN AMAPTIAN TOV KOCMOV], and with the same hand holding a cross-staff, while with the other he points slightly upwards, where one would expect to find not an entire figure of Christ (because there is no room for it) but at least a tiny bust of him in a segment of heaven. This is a familiar composition and occurs on many Greek icons, including several on Sinai.[65]

It is not easy to ascertain what might have been the artist's reason for choosing the particular subjects combined in this panel. We have not been able to detect any dogmatic or liturgical common denominator and prefer in this particular case to think of a topographical reason. Both events depicted on the right took place in the Transjordanian desert where Mount Nebo, the mountain on which Moses died, is situated. This place had in the Early Christian period become a *locus sanctus*, visited partly by the same pilgrims who came to Sinai. Already Etheria at the end of the fourth century saw a little church on Mount Nebo and so did Peter the Iberian around A.D. 430.[66] In 1933, a basilica of respectable size was excavated,[67] with some floor mosaics, one of them dated A.D. 597, so we can conclude that at the end of the sixth century a new Church was built over the older one. This Church, dedicated to Moses, whose burial place was venerated there despite the biblical statement that "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day" (according to a legend,

60. *Ibid.*, pl. 147.

61. E.g., the Octateuch of Smyrna (D. C. Hesseling, *Miniatures de l'Octateuque Grec de Smyrne*, Leiden, 1909, pl. 79, No. 267).

62. An exception in Byzantine art is the miniature in the menologion of Basil II, Vatican, gr. 1613 (*Il menologio di Basilio II* [*Codices e Vaticanis selecti*, VIII] Turin, 1907, pl. 13) where for Sept. 4 the dead Moses is depicted lying stiffly on the ground while an angel with a censer is performing the funeral service. This, however, is not an actual burial scene as in Western art, since there is no tomb or sarcophagus visible. The composition seems to have been inspired not by a biblical illustration, but by one of the frequent conventional representations of the mourning over a dead monk or hermit, laid on the ground or occasionally on a straw mat (*ibid.*, pls. 90, 327, 354, 394).

63. E.g., in Aelfric's Paraphrase of the Pentateuch, an eleventh century Anglo-Saxon manuscript in London, British Museum, cod. Cotton Claudius B. IV, fol. 139v (H. Swarzenski, *Monuments of Romanesque Art*, London, 1954, pl. 59).

64. E.g., Oxford, Bodleian Library, cod. Bodl. 270b, fol. 93v (A. de Laborde, *op.cit.*, I, pl. 93).

65. E.g., Sotiriou, *op.cit.*, pl. 86.

66. Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Litterature*, XII, 1935, col. 1065ff. *s.v.* Nébo.

67. Fr. Sylvester Saller, "L'Eglise du Mont Nébo," *Revue biblique*, XLIII, 1934, pp. 120ff.; idem, *The Memorial of Moses on Mount Nebo*, I, Jerusalem, 1941; Leclercq, *Dictionnaire*, XV, 1950, col. 1410ff. *s.v.* Siaga.

it was revealed to a shepherd in a vision), is of particular interest in relation to our icon. Its southern aisle is occupied by two chapels, with ornate mosaic floors, one serving as the baptistry and the other being dedicated to the Theotokos. Thus the various parts of the Church are related to the subjects of our icon, i.e., the death of Moses, a scene from the life of John the Baptist, and a hieratic representation of the Theotokos. It is thus tempting to conclude that our icon actually was made as a gift for the Mount Nebo Church, which, like all Pilgrimage churches, must have been filled with icons donated by pilgrims. The ascent to Mount Nebo is made from Madaba, famous for its geographical map of Palestine in mosaic and apparently a center for mosaic manufacture which produced the mosaics of the Mount Nebo Church as well. Destroyed by the Persians and Arabs in the seventh century, Madaba was partially rebuilt by the crusaders,[68] and at that time magister Thietmar visited Mount Nebo and spent a night there, in the monastery that belonged to the Greeks, as he tells us.[69] This is the same Thietmar who in 1217 had made the pilgrimage to Sinai. However, if our icon was destined for Mount Nebo, it is not likely that it was made there. Its place of origin is once more, we believe, our Acre workshop, which, as we shall see, did produce icons for specific localities for which iconographic subjects strongly connected with them were chosen.

On Sinai there is an icon showing the Virgin, flanked by four saints and standing under an arch; two scenes, taken from the lives of Moses and Elijah, fill the spandrels (Fig. 17).[70] Because of the obviously Sinaitic context of these two scenes, we should like to discuss them first. At the left Moses, with veiled hands, is shown ascending a mountain, obviously meant to be Sinai, in a pose typical of the one who receives the tablets of the law. Yet there is no segment of heaven with the hand of God holding the tablets, as one would expect, but in front of Moses is a bush, surely meant to be the burning bush; this element introduces another scene, where the veiling of the hands has no meaning. Obviously, the artist has fused the elements of the two best-known Moses scenes associated with Sinai. The Moses figure is balanced by that of Elijah seated on a rock and clad in a fur-trimmed coat fastened over the chest. Elijah turns his head, and looks up at the raven that is bringing a loaf of bread to his desert abode on Mount Sinai. Both *loca sancta*, the mountain peak where Moses received the tablets and the cave where Elijah took refuge, are at a few hundred meters' distance on Djebel Mousa, and the depiction of these two events clearly points to a topographical knowledge of Sinai and suggests that the icon was designed for the monastery where it is still preserved.

A small but significant detail should be noted: Moses, who in Middle Byzantine art is always depicted as youthful and beardless, wears a shaggy beard in the icon.[71] In this form the beard is a Western element and Moses is depicted with it throughout the Arsénal Bible (Fig. 14).[72] Here is one more feature which closely relates our icon group to this manuscript, strengthens its roots in French iconography and supports the idea of a common origin in a workshop in Acre. It is interesting to compare miniature and icon in still another respect from the point of view of East-West relations. In the miniature, Moses is kneeling on both knees and receives the tablets with both hands, a pose unfamiliar in Byzantine art, whereas the ascending Moses in the icon is thoroughly Byzantine. This indicates that the icon painter freed himself more readily from Western tradition (which he knew, as proved by the beard of Moses), while at the same time he

68. Leclercq, *Dictionnaire*, x, 1931, col. 811 *s.v.* Madaba.

69. J. C. M. Laurent, *Peregrinationes Medii Aevi Quatuor*, Appendix: *Mag. Thietmari Peregrinatio*, Leipzig, 1873, p. 35.

70. It measures 31.3 x 24.8 cm.

71. In the Early Byzantine period there was no fixed type, and the bearded and beardless Moses appear side by side. In the great apse mosaic at Sinai the bearded Moses appears three times and in each instance differently: in the scene of loosening the sandals his beard is dark and rounded, in the receiving of the law, dark and pointed, and in the Metamorphosis, white and full (G. A. Sotiriou, "Τὸ *μωσαϊκὸν τῆς* Μεταμορφώσεως *τοῦ* Καθολικοῦ *τῆσ μονῆς τοῦ* Σινᾶ," *Atti dell'VIII Congresso di Studi Bizantini*, III, 1951, Rome, 1953, pp. 246ff. and pls. LXXVI and LXXXVII-LXXXVIII), but none of the three types seems to have continued in Middle Byzantine art and they all differ from the type we meet on the Crusader icons.

72. Buchthal, *op.cit.*, pl. 63.

imitated a Byzantine model, either a miniature or, even more likely, an icon, with much greater empathy and faithfulness than did the miniaturist. In the Elijah picture, the type and pose are even more exclusively Byzantine and correspond with a miniature depicting this subject in the only extant fully illustrated Greek Books of Kings (Vat. cod. gr. 333, from the eleventh or twelfth century).[73]

The Virgin is the dominant figure, standing in the center on a footstool and holding the Christ Child in her left arm. Basically, this is the type of the Hodegetria[74] known from Early Byzantine works of art such as one of the introductory miniatures of the Rabula Gospels[75] and a recently discovered Early Christian encaustic icon in Rome.[76] In the tenth century this type is preserved mainly in ivory reliefs, which as objects of worship assumed the same function as the painted icons.[77] The usual gestures of the Christ Child, which we may expect to have been present in the model of our icon, are the holding of a scroll in the left hand and the blessing with the right. Slight variations do occur within Byzantine art,[78] but they are never as far-reaching as those in our icon, in which the Virgin lifts Christ up to a height at which he can put his right arm around her neck. This gesture results in a more intimate relationship between Mother and Child than we ever find in the Byzantine Hodegetria. The emphasis on the human relationship between Mother and Child is not absent from Byzantine art, but it is invested in another Virgin type, the Eleousa. The Western artist apparently fuses the two types which the Byzantine artist is more careful to keep separated. In doing so, the Western artist reveals his unfamiliarity with one of the basic principles of Greek icon painting, namely, that each icon is derived from a very distinct archetype which always has to remain recognizable. Now, the very same mixture of types as in our icon occurs in an ivory plaque with a standing Virgin (Fig. 16),[79] which is clearly a Western imitation of a Byzantine model. She is flanked by two genuinely Byzantine triptych wings with busts of saints, and decorates the center of one of a pair of book covers, of which the other contains an ivory with a representation of the Crucifixion of the later Metz school of the tenth century.[80] Goldschmidt realized that the Virgin plaque is not related to the Crucifixion plaque and he left its date undecided. The soft treatment of the folds, the strong human sentiment in the relationship between the Virgin and Child and the iconographic closeness to our icon suggest, in our opinion, a date about the same as that of our icon, i.e., the thirteenth century. This date would agree with that of the filigree, which apparently is French. Thus it seems quite likely that the Virgin ivory was made *ad hoc* by a French artist for this very cover.

The Virgin in our icon is flanked by the princes of the apostles, Peter holding the keys and Paul holding a codex. They are of the familiar type, and they in turn are flanked by Antonios and Euthymios, two of the most prominent representatives of Egyptian and Syrian monkhood. While Antonios, with the forked spiraled beard, and Euthymios, with the long flowing white beard, faithfully repeat the Byzantine facial types, here again a small peculiarity reveals that the Western painter was not familiar with every detail of Eastern monasticism: both monks wear under their clocks the megaloschema, a broad embroidered stole which does not easily permit the forming of zigzag folds at the edges as is the case in our icon. In genuine Byzantine painting the megaloschema is invariably a rather stiff piece of cloth.

73. J. Lassus, "Les Miniatures Byzantines du Livre des Rois," *Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire*, XLV, 1928, pp. 38ff.

74. N. P. Kondakov, *The Iconography of the Mother of God* [in Russian], II, St. Petersburg, 1915, pp. 152ff.

75. C. Cecchelli, G. Furlani, M. Salmi, *The Rabula Gospels*, Olten, 1959, p. 48 and pl. fol. 1b..

76. C. Bertelli, "La Madonna del Pantheon," *Bollettino d'Arte*, ser. 4, XLVI, 1961, pp. 24ff.

77. A. Goldschmidt and K. Weitzmann, *Die Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, II, Berlin, 1934, pls. XX-XXI, 46-51; XXIX, 73 and 76; XXXI, 78 and elsewhere.

78. E.g., the ivory in Stuttgart (*ibid.*, pl. XXXV, 87), in which the Christ Child touches the sleeve of the Virgin's right arm.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 60 and pl. XLIV, 121.

80. A. Goldschmidt, *Die Elfenbeinskulpturen aus der Zeit der karolingischen und sächsischen Kaiser*, I, Berlin, 1914, p. 58 and pl. LI, 115.

What is the meaning of this particular choice of saints in an icon made for Sinai? The main chapel outside the Church but within the walls is, not surprisingly, a Panaghia Chapel. Among the other chapels within the precinct was one dedicated to Peter and Paul. It is no longer extant but is indicated on the plan of the monastery drawn by Pococke before the middle of the eighteenth century, where it is located in the northwest corner.[81] Another chapel, still in existence, is dedicated to St. Anthony, and its small interior is dominated by an icon of the title saint, which is far over life-size and placed on an easel. Only Euthymios lacks a chapel, although it must be remembered that the monastery originally had many more chapels within its walls than those either now in existence or known to have existed. The presence on Sinai of icons depicting Euthymios should not be surprising since this well-known hermit, who first settled in a lavra near Pharan, the once famous bishopric close to St. Catherine's, must be considered almost a local Sinaitic saint. Besides, his strong defense of the Chalcedonian dogma of Christ's two natures, to which he had converted the Empress Eudocia, must have made him a much venerated saint, especially on Sinai, an outpost of Chalcedonian Orthodoxy in monophysite surroundings. For these and perhaps still other reasons Euthymios is depicted on a considerable number of Sinai icons, singly as well as in conjunction with other saints.

Euthymios occurs on another icon of our group which depicts, in two strips, a Deësis and three saints, of whom he is one (Fig. 18).[82] This layout immediately recalls the center of two ivory triptychs of the tenth century, one in the Vatican and the other in the Louvre,[83] and although our panel apparently never had wings, nor was intended to have them, the model may very well have been the center of a triptych. If so, the Western artist basically changed its iconography, not understanding the liturgical program of his Byzantine model. The Byzantine layout requires the apostles in the lower row, while other saints, arranged in a certain order of rank, fill the wings, which are likewise divided into two rows. This layout of a triptych corresponds to a strict order based on the prayer of intercession in the liturgy.[84] However, the Deësis with Christ enthroned, flanked by the Virgin and John the Baptist, whose gestures of prayer indicate their function as intercessors, is Byzantine in every respect.

The most prominent place in the lower strip is occupied by Moses, who obviously is meant to be the main intercessor, pointing upward to Christ. The substitution of Moses for an apostle is clearly made in order to introduce the most prominent Sinaitic saint, and a specific hint as to locality is given in the text of the open scroll: ΕΙΠΕΝ K̄C̄ ΠΡΟC ΜΩΗCΗC ΑΝΑΒΕΙ ΠΡΟC ΜΗ ΗC ΤΟ ΟΡΟC (Ex. 24:12; or 34:11). As in the preceding icon, Moses is depicted with a short shaggy beard, the sunken cheeks of an ascetic, and a pensive, penetrating, almost burning look. The hair is slightly disheveled and thus the face has a pathetic quality more often associated with John the Baptist. On his left stands the Archangel Michael, holding an orb in one hand and a drawn sword in the other. Somewhat misunderstood is his costume, composed of two different kinds of armor, scale armor and plate armor, which are rarely combined in good Byzantine art.[85] Finally, there is once more the figure of St. Euthymios, very similar indeed to the one in the preceding icon. Here the megaloschema is even more misunderstood, since the zigzag line strongly creates the false impression of pleating. The gold diamond-and-pearl pattern on a black ground filling the inner frame is overlapped by the nimbi, a detail which occurs in many icons of our workshop as well as in Dugento panels but, so far as we know, not in authentic Byzantine icons.

81. R. Pococke, *A Description of the East*, I. *Observations on Egypt*, London, 1743, p. 150 and pl. LVI.

82. It measures 27.2 x 19.1 cm.

83. Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *op.cit.*, pp. 33-34 and pls. XI, XIII.

84. E. Kantorowicz, "Ivories and Litanies," *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, V, 1942, pp. 56ff. and pl. 18a-b.

85. A good example is the 11th century icon with three soldier saints on Sinai (Sotiriou, *op.cit.*, pl. 69).

The underlying tendency toward greater realism, which can be observed to some degree in every member of our group, is nowhere more clearly shown than in an icon depicting two saints on horseback (Fig. 19).[86] On the basis of their facial types, we expect them to be Theodore and George, the most outstanding pair of soldier saints, who are very often grouped together in Byzantine icons. The inscription on the left figure is lost, but the forked beard indicates that it is more than likely Theodore. However, the remnants of an inscription to the right of the youthful horseman's head (ΔΙ . . . ΡΗ . . .) make it quite clear that he is Demetrios, who, since he is always depicted as youthful, is pictorially indistinguishable from George. They are riding on stallions of a heavy breed, in marked contrast to the usually taller and more elegant horses common in Byzantine art. The lively quality of these horses is enhanced by the fact that the left one turns toward the beholder and the right one moves away and throws its head around, thus suggesting a circular movement. The rolling eyes, so characteristic of the human beings in our icon group, are also imparted to the horses, thereby creating a strong impression of fierceness. The bearded rider is the more successful creation, organically better understood, while the youthful one twists his head in a movement too vigorous to be entirely convincing. The artist, in trying to create a spatial composition, overdid his display of diagonal and circular movements within too narrow limits. Furthermore, while the left rider is dressed in an armor and mantle which closely follow Byzantine models, the one at the right wears under his armor a long tunic of Western style which reaches down to the ankles, and the mantle, meant to be a chlamys, lacks the fibula over one shoulder. Such repeated misunderstandings show the difficulties of the Latin artist who copies Byzantine models. This panel in particular conveys the artistic tensions which result from the determined effort of a Crusader artist to cope with unfamiliar Byzantine subject matter. He asserts a temper of great vitality and shows an inclination for realistic observation, but at the same time he lacks the delicacy, refinement, and restraint characteristic of good Byzantine art.

Of the saints usually shown in bust form, St. Nicholas is the one most frequently depicted on Byzantine icons, as well as in our Crusader group. This is explained by the fact that St. Nicholas, after his relics had been deposited in Bari in 1087, became as prominent a saint in the Latin Church as he had been up to this time in the Greek Church, where his icon is frequently placed in the iconostasis in addition to the Deësis group. The Nicholas icon reproduced here (Fig. 20)[87] is one of several belonging to our group, and all share certain iconographical features. It shows the saint making a gesture of blessing and holding a jewel-studded Gospel book in his veiled hand; above him, near the upper corners, are small busts of Christ and the Virgin, the former offering a jewel-studded Gospel book and the latter an omophorion, alluding to St. Nicholas' investiture as a bishop. These busts flanking the saint can be traced back to the twelfth century and may not go back much further, since a few as yet unpublished Middle Byzantine Nicholas icons in Sinai do not include them, while from the later twelfth and the thirteenth centuries on they are quite frequently associated with the saint.

Sotiriou published one close parallel to our icon which he dates in the twelfth century, showing all the characteristics of our group.[88] The figures of both Christ and the Virgin have the unmistakable rolling eyes, and the nimbi are outlined in white dots, another familiar feature of our group. A further characteristic is the highly emotional effect achieved through a strong emphasis on the contraction of the brows and the asymmetrical design of the eyes. Moreover, there is a strong undulation of the beard that frames the ascetic cheeks, and the bulbous forehead is sharply overaccentuated. Yet the two Nicholas busts, close as they are to each other, do not appear to have been painted by the same artist, as our icon is of a somewhat higher quality. Sotiriou, in publishing his

86. It measures 23.8 x 16.1 cm.

87. It measures 30.9 x 23.4 cm.

88. Sotiriou, *op.cit.*, p. 93 and pl. 81.

Nicholas icon, observed the realistic element in the face, and for this reason linked it with the frescoes of Nerediza in Russia and Milesevo in Yugoslavia and dated it as early as the twelfth century. Since it belongs to our Crusader group, in which the realistic element is even more strongly marked than in the Russian and Yugoslavian frescoes, we believe that its place of origin, like that of all the others, is Acre, and its date not before the middle of the thirteenth century.

Among the numerous St. Nicholas icons on Sinai, there is one from the end of the twelfth century which, in addition to the saint's bust and the small ones of Christ and the Virgin, has a cycle of narrative scenes from St. Nicholas' life on the broad frame (Fig. 21).[89] Placing this icon alongside ours, one can clearly perceive, despite their almost identical composition, certain fundamental differences in concept, which can, at least to some extent, be explained by the slightly later date of the Crusader icon, but these variations are essentially those resulting from a genuine Byzantine creation being imitated by an artist trained in the Western tradition. In every respect, the hieratic style of the Byzantine creation is more consistent: the phelonion falls in straighter outlines, the omophorion looks as if it had been starched, and the fingers of the blessing hand are more angular, thus making the symbol of the cross implied in this gesture more conspicuous; one could continue describing details, all of which would lead to the same conclusion, namely, that Western artists of the thirteenth century were so deeply steeped in the nascent realism of contemporary European art that despite their strenuous attempts to copy Byzantine models faithfully they could not conceal their different outlook concerning the world of reality.

Because the evaluation of the specific character of the Crusader icons in relation to their Byzantine models depends so much upon a clear comprehension of their differences within the framework of an almost identical iconography, I should like to conclude our selection with two Virgin icons of the same type, one a typical Crusader icon (Fig. 22) with stucco background and nimbi like those on the wings of the triptych (Figs. 9-12),[90] the other an equally typical work of the most cultivated style of Constantinople (Fig. 23),[91] executed in mosaic rather than in tempera and set against an ornamental background which is a clear imitation of cloisonné enamel patterns. Both Virgins represent the type of the Hodegetria, except that the Christ Child is seated on the right arm instead of on the left as he is in the archetype and in the innumerable copies derived from it. Yet, when we analyze the seated pose, we will immediately perceive the fundamental difference between the Crusader icon and the Constantinopolitan one. In the former, the Child sits very firmly and comfortably on the Virgin's arm with his legs dangling in a natural pose, while in the latter the Child, if one rationalizes, is almost suspended and only touched but not held by the Virgin, and despite the rather naturalistic effect of the crossed legs and the one foot seen from underneath, such a pose would only be possible if the upper leg were firmly supported. This manner of depicting the Christ Child is a rather standard formula in Byzantine art, which stresses the immateriality of Christ's body and therewith his divine nature. Christ's facial expression in the two icons corresponds to these different concepts: While the design of the curved brows, the eyes, the shape of the mouth, etc., are very much alike, the mere turning of the head upward in the one case results in an expression of human and childlike affection. The fact that in the mosaic panel the Child's eyes look straight ahead, directed neither toward the Virgin nor the worshiper, stresses the aloofness, and thus once more, the divine aspect of Christ's nature. The blessing hand, unfortunately destroyed but surely repainted in the correct position, must be related to the worshiper, even though Christ is not looking at him, while in the Crusader icon, the blessing hand is correlated with the upward look toward the Virgin and thus creates the impression of Christ bless-

89. *Ibid.*, p. 144, pl. 165, and colorplate. It measures 82 x 56.9 cm.

90. It measures 24.4 x 17.5 cm.

91. Sotiriou, *op.cit.*, pp. 85ff. and pl. 71. It measures 44.6 x 33 cm. Cf. also V. Beneševič, *op.cit.*, pl. 19, and O. Demus, "Die Entstehung des Paläologenstils in der Malerei," *Berichte zum XI. Internat. Byzant. Kongress*, Munich, 1958, fig. 16.

ing and at the same time talking to his mother. With the obvious intention of creating a closer human contact, the Virgin's head is more deeply inclined and, although she does not look directly into Christ's face, the axis of her eyes meets that of Christ's eyes, and the over-all effect is indeed one of the Virgin looking at Christ with affection, but also, as suggested by the contracted brows, with sorrow, as if she foresaw Christ's suffering. In this allusion to the Passion, however covert, one senses Western sentiment. The Byzantine Virgin, entirely unemotional and devoid of any human quality, not for lack of expressive power but because of the desire to find a pictorial formula for the divine, shows a very slight degree of human sentiment by the lowering of the head, but only to the point where her glance passes over Christ's head, thus avoiding the direct human contact which is so powerfully represented in the Crusader icon, while earlier portrayals of the Hodegetria showed her facing straight ahead. One must again emphasize that the Western artist tried his utmost to copy a Byzantine model as faithfully as possible, but the differences described above, though expressed by pictorial means, are not to be considered as merely formal, owing to the individuality of the artist, but as the result of fundamentally different religious concepts based on a different understanding of the relationship between the human and the divine.

While in our study we have purposely concentrated on unpublished icons, Sotiriou's book contains several members of our group, and we should like to discuss briefly their relationship to the Crusader group as we have tried to establish it above. We have already mentioned the Nicholas icon,[92] a variant of our icon depicting the same saint (Fig. 20).

The most characteristic example is the triptych with the Crucifixion in the center and Moses and Aaron depicted standing on the inside surface of the wings.[93] The type of Christ and especially those of the Virgin and John, with their characteristic gestures of fingering their mouth and nose, respectively, are so much the same as in the other Crucifixion panels already discussed (Figs. 1, 3, and 5) that we obviously are dealing with just another product of the same workshop, and the realistic expression of the weeping angels in the spandrels confirms this close relationship. Sotiriou was aware of the realistic element in this panel and formed the correct conclusion that this realism must be explained as the result of a contact with the Latin West. He also cites, as the closest parallel, the Crucifixion miniature of the Perugia Missal (Fig. 2), which he took to be a work of upper Italy as scholarship in general had done up to that time.[94] In the light of the data as he saw them, Sotiriou then assumed the Crucifixion triptych to be the product of a thirteenth century Constantinopolitan artist who worked in Venetian surroundings, while our own investigation leads us to believe that it is the product of a Western, most likely a French and not an Italian artist working in Acre. Moreover, the fact that Moses and Aaron, the patron saints of Mount Sinai, are depicted on the wings, seems to indicate that the triptych, like others in our group (Figs. 17 and 18) was actually made for Sinai. Both figures support the contention that we are dealing with the work of a Western artist. Moses, who holds the tablets in his veiled hands, is depicted with a shaggy beard, slightly disheveled hair and an ascetic face, features we have already noticed in other icons of our group (Figs. 17 and 18). While Moses is a conscious revision of the youthful type which still prevailed in Byzantine art of the thirteenth century,[95] Aaron shows misunderstandings in the design of the costume which can easily be comprehended by comparison with an Aaron of a genuine thirteenth century Byzantine icon.[96] In both icons he is dressed, correctly, in a long robe over which, as a second piece, he is wearing the ephod (Ex. 28 and 39). In the Byzantine icon it is a kind of embroidered tunic which at its edge shows the little bells mentioned in the text, while in the Western imitation it has lost all distinction as a very special part of the priestly dress and is depicted merely as a plain mantle. In Byzantine art the priestly dress is influenced by the traditional Persian dress

92. Cf. note 88.

93. Sotiriou, *op.cit.*, p. 175 and pl. 193.

94. Thus G. Millet, *Recherches*, p. 413 and fig. 437, the source of Sotiriou's information.

95. E.g., Sotiriou, *op.cit.*, pls. 160-161.

96. *Ibid.*, pl. 56.

worn by Daniel and the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace, i.e., the mantle is the lacerna fastened over the chest with a brooch, and the miter is a headdress like a small modius. Both are no longer understood in the Western imitation. At the same time, the strange triangular headgear of the latter is closely paralleled by that of the priests in the Arsénal Bible,[97] a small but significant detail which links our triptych with this French manuscript.

The same types of Moses and Aaron occur once more on an icon[98] which Sotiriou, after wavering between the Macedonian period and the thirteenth century, dates correctly in the latter span; but since he associates it with the miniatures of a Prophet book in the Vatican Library (cod. gr. 1153), he seems to have regarded it as of purely Byzantine origin. Surely this icon is not by the same hand as the wings of the triptych; and Aaron's priestly garments, in particular the ephod, are better understood than in the previous example. Yet Aaron's headdress, and especially the facial type of the bearded and ascetic Moses, clearly indicate that this icon also belongs to our Crusader group. There is something particularly impressive about the Moses figures of our group, all of which have a passionate and soulful look in their eyes, a feature most prominently displayed in still another icon of our group which depicts only the bust of the prophet. Sotiriou[99] recognized its close connection with the Moses on the wing of the triptych and consequently attributed it, likewise, to the Veneto-Byzantine school. Here, especially, its similarity to the heads of John the Baptist is striking and, surely, intentional, emphasizing the impact of ascetic life in the Sinaitic desert, and it may be recalled that in one of our icons (Fig. 15) the depictions of Moses and John the Baptist in the desert are actually paralleled on the same panel.

Again and again, it is the feature of the rolling eyes by which many icons can immediately be recognized as members of our group, e.g., a figure of Christ enthroned on a fragmentary panel which originally portrayed a Deësis; only a narrow strip of the Virgin's figure is preserved, while that of John the Baptist is lost altogether.[100] Sotiriou, with his keen powers of observation, was aware of the strongly plastic and corporeal values of the Christ, and he knew that this was the feature which appealed to the Latin West. However, instead of taking it to be the work of a Western artist who copied a Byzantine model, he explained this relationship in reverse, by assuming that the icon fragment was a Byzantine work closely related to the school of the capital and belonging to a particular group which served as models for the *maniera greca* in Italy. In similar terms, Sotiriou explained the icon showing the bust of a Pantocrator,[101] the reproduction of which he placed alongside the Moses bust already discussed, clearly realizing their stylistic connection. He approached the solution of the problem of localizing this style very closely indeed by assuming that the icon was the work of a provincial monastery and belonged to a group that served as models for the Veneto-Byzantine school. Related to the Pantocrator, we believe, is the icon with the bust of the praying Virgin,[102] which Sotiriou identifies as the type of the Agiosoritissa. Yet it has been shown by Sirarpie Der Nersessian[103] that the Agiosoritissa type is one that often becomes associated with Christ and John the Baptist in a Deësis group, thus losing its distinction as an individual Virgin icon. If we are not mistaken, this very Virgin icon and the preceding Christ bust actually belong to the same Deësis, since the facial features are very similar and suggest that the two icons were painted by the same artist.[104]

In Sotiriou's book there is one more icon depicting a Virgin and Child enthroned, of the type of

97. Buchthal, *op.cit.*, pl. 65a.

98. Sotiriou, *op.cit.*, p. 166 and pl. 179.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 178 and pl. 195.

100. *Ibid.*, p. 163 and pl. 176. Sotiriou's remark that the lateral figures were depicted on a smaller scale is a false impression created by the fact that his reproduction is considerably cut at the bottom.

101. *Ibid.*, p. 178 and pl. 196.

102. *Ibid.*, p. 181 and pl. 199.

103. S. Der Nersessian, "Two images of the Virgin," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, XIV, 1960, pp. 77ff.

104. The difference in height is only 2 cm. and thus well within the limits of slight variations which occur more often than not among icons of the same set.

the Platytera[105] that can be associated with our group, but unfortunately a bad crack has split the panel in two, the head of the Virgin being almost entirely lost. The panel once formed the center of a triptych, whose wings[106] fitted into the sunken field of the center, which is cusped, thus revealing the Western Gothic influence, whereas the twelfth century central plaques of triptychs and often tetraptychs are inevitably semicircular.[107] The Virgin's huge nimbus shows an incised pattern of simple palmettes, a technique which Sotiriou associated with a certain group of ceramic plates found in Corinth and which can be dated in the twelfth century, a comparison which led him to date the icon—in our opinion, too early—in the same period. Parallels closer in style and technique and more likely to have influenced the icon painters are to be found in the miniatures of Crusader manuscripts. One of the most richly illustrated manuscripts, next in importance to the Arsénal Bible, is a *Histoire Universelle* in London (Brit. Mus. add. 15268), made at Acre in the second half of the thirteenth century.[108] In a representation of the Hospitality of Abraham[109] the nimbi of the patriarch and of the angel at the left show a pattern which is clearly an imitation of an incised one and more closely resembles that of the nimbus of our Virgin in the icon than any design in the ceramic plates. There is no need to point out once more the characteristic rendering of the eyes, which relates all manuscripts of the Acre scriptorium, including the London *Histoire Universelle*, to our icon group and justifies a date for the Virgin icon of not later than the middle of the thirteenth century. A word may be said about the little figure in the lower right-hand corner of the icon that Sotiriou takes to be either an Arabic monk as the donor or John of Damascus, who usually is depicted with a turban. However, the mantle worn by this figure is clearly not monastic garb: it is a mantle with long slits permitting free movement of the arms, which is a secular garment; thus the figure is a lay donor of uncertain nationality. He kneels with his body upright, which is a Western tradition,[110] while Byzantine tradition, at least up to this time, showed the donor in a more prostrate pose, one of the various forms of a proskynesis.[111]

Even before the appearance of Sotiriou's book, a remarkable icon which can be ascribed to our group had already been published by Beneševič.[112] It represents the Virgin standing, with the Christ Child more suspended than held in front of her. She is flanked by Moses and Elijah, and behind the latter appears a Church Father who holds a Gospel book in his veiled hand. Beneševič, unsure of the identity of this bishop, proposes two bishops of Alexandria as alternative choices: Cyril or John *ὁ ἐλεήμων*. Yet it could be neither one, because Cyril always wears the white cap characteristic of Alexandrian patriarchs and John, though white-haired, is not bald. Such details were studiously observed by painters of this period, and on them actually depends the possibility of identification in cases where inscriptions are missing. The most popular bald Church Father is St. Nicholas, but he wears a beard which has a more undulated outline and is forked (cf. Fig. 20). The more squarish outline of the beard, sometimes swinging out, as in our icon, is typical of Gregory of Nazianzus, whom we believe to be represented here. Not much needs to be said about Moses: he is the same Sinaitic Moses with the short beard and the sorrowful face seen in other icons of our group, and once more the scroll in his hand contains the same passage (Exod. 24:12, or 34:1) as does the one in the hand of Moses in the Deësis icon (Fig. 18) which refers to the call of God on Mount Sinai. The pairing with Elijah—who, as mentioned before (p. 192), is likewise a Sinaitic saint, venerated in a chapel just below the peak of the Djebel Musa—makes it all the more

105. Sotiriou, *op.cit.*, p. 157 and pl. 171. His plate 172, depicting the back of an icon with a textile pattern of crosses in circles is, however, not the back of our Virgin icon as Sotiriou erroneously states, but of that wing of a 12th century tetraptych which depicts the Presentation in the Temple, the Anastasis and Ascension (*ibid.*, pl. 78).

106. We have been able to identify the wings within the Sinai collection and shall publish them elsewhere.

107. E.g., *ibid.*, pls. 49, 77-78 and elsewhere.

108. Buchthal, *op.cit.*, pp. 79ff., 150f. and pls. 83ff.

109. *Ibid.*, pl. 88c.

110. For a similar pose, characteristically on an icon which also has Crusader features, cf. Sotiriou, *op.cit.*, pl. 187.

111. E.g., *ibid.*, pls. 32, 168, 169.

112. *Op.cit.*, cols. 39ff. and pl. 21. It measures 32.2 x 25.7 cm.

certain that we are dealing here with an icon not only made in our Crusader workshop but made specifically for Sinai just like the icon which depicts scenes from the lives of Moses and Elijah on the mountain (Fig. 17). This Sinaitic connection, then, is reflected also in the Virgin. Venerated by these two prophets on Sinai, she had, by the time this icon was painted, already been associated with the voice in the Burning Bush, and she is the Virgin type called *θεοτόκος ἡ τῆς βάτου*, represented in this manner in a considerable number of Sinai icons and sometimes also inscribed with this epithet.[113] Within our group, this icon is close in style to the Virgin icon (Fig. 22) as far as the treatment of the faces, with their particularly strong human emotion, is concerned, but also in such technical details as the pattern of the stucco background. Beneševič ascribes to the same workshop an icon showing St. Sabas worshiping the Virgin, which had been taken to Kiev with Ouspensky's loot,[114] but this is surely not the case, since the latter is purely Byzantine in character and bears no traces of the Crusader style. Moreover, he dates our icon much too late, in the fourteenth or possibly even the fifteenth century. Beneševič has published still another icon,[115] depicting three standing soldier saints, who, because of their rolling eyes, have some connection with our group, but since it is not our intention to discuss every icon of our group, we prefer at this time not to proceed any further with the description of additional works. Those published and discussed here should suffice to give a first impression of their peculiar character, and we should like to conclude by discussing how these icons fit into the history of Crusader art in general.

The existence in St. Catherine's monastery of so many icons that are the products of one atelier needs some explanation. Surely, the mere fact of their astonishingly large number—they must be counted by the dozens—excludes the possibility that these products of Western artists were individually imported from Italy or France. They must have been produced in a center which could regularly supply the monastery; on the basis of close comparisons with miniatures executed in a scriptorium at Acre, we believe them to have been made in the same center. After the fall of Jerusalem in 1244, Acre had become the capital and remained, politically and artistically, the center of the Crusaders until its fall in 1291, when they moved to Cyprus. The dating of the icons discussed here in the second half of the thirteenth century on the basis of style fits very well with these facts of history. But why should so many of them have survived in St. Catherine's monastery?

We know that the Crusaders actually had a foothold in the monastery and built their own chapel there, "St. Catherine's of the Franks." When the Nuremberg patricians Hans Tucher and Sebald Richter visited the monastery in 1479, the Latin Mass was celebrated on their arrival in the convent, and Felix Fabri from Ulm, at about the same time, explicitly mentions that, upon the arrival of his party, the Mass was celebrated in a special chapel set apart for Latin use.[116] This chapel still existed in the eighteenth century, when Richard Pococke, on his plan, indicated its location as directly over the Western entrance in the part of the monastery which was rebuilt in modern times and today is used as guest quarters. From the *Histoire des Croisades* of Jacques de Vitry we learn that during the Crusader period the bishop of Sinai was the suffragan of the Latin bishop of Petra.[117] We know little about the activities of the Latin monks who must have lived at that time in St. Catherine's, yet they have left traces, in addition to the remarkable collection of Crusader icons.

We would expect, first of all, Latin service books in the Library. Actually, only one is preserved, a ninth century Psalter which was erroneously classified under the Slavonic Manuscripts as codex 5.[118] This suggests that, at some time in Sinai's later history, the Latin manuscripts were willfully destroyed, and that the Psalter escaped this fate because of its misleading signature. This impression

113. *Ibid.*, fig. 155.
114. Kondakov, *Sinai and Athos icons* (cited in note 2), pl. IX.
115. *Op.cit.*, col. 45 and pl. 24. Once more his date—in this case the first half of the 16th century—is much too late.
116. L. Eckenstein, *A History of Sinai*, London, 1921, pp. 167ff.
117. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
118. E. A. Lowe, "An unknown Latin Psalter on Mount Sinai," *Scriptorium*, IX, 1955, pp. 177ff.

is confirmed by the fact that I noticed many Greek manuscripts in which cut up parchment leaves with Latin texts were used as fly leaves and to repair damaged pages. A Limoges enamel with a Christ Enthroned, which is nailed on the old wooden doors of the Church, must once have decorated a Latin service book, and in the treasure are quite a number of objects—a Murano glass paste, a Venetian crystal cross, etc.—testifying to the Crusaders' presence on Mount Sinai. Perhaps the most vivid reminders are the extraordinary number of coats of arms and names of knights carved all over the walls of the refectory.[119] In the light of this literary and documentary evidence it can no longer come as a surprise to find an accumulation of Crusader icons in St. Catherine's. These apparently were not as objectionable to later generations, which set out to eradicate Western traces, as were the manuscripts. Many of them, particularly those which bore Greek instead of Latin inscriptions, may not even have been recognized as Crusader products, although quite a number with Latin inscriptions also survive. In a few instances the Latin inscriptions were painted over by Greek ones at a later date, thus confirming the existence of an anti-Latin trend. This is, of course, not the place to speculate on the time and the motives of such a movement; this will have to wait until the literary and documentary evidence can be presented more fully. That this strong orientation of Sinai to the Latin West did indeed exist in the thirteenth century is also substantiated by some papal bulls, like that of Honorius III from 1226, which was later confirmed by Gregory IX. It confirms, and, for this reason enumerates, the monastery's possessions, and it is interesting that, among the metochia, there is also a Church of St. Michael in Jerusalem and a Church of St. Catherine near Acre,[120] i.e., those centers to which we should like to attribute the responsibility for the flow of icons to Sinai.

How does this new chapter of Crusader art fit into our present knowledge of its total history? Interest in the art of the Crusades is of rather recent date and has been put on a firm scholarly basis only with the publications by Enlart[121] and by Vincent and Abel.[122] It was logical that the first steps should have been taken by architectural historians investigating remains standing above ground. Their attempt to trace the European sources led them to various provinces of France. The Crusader churches show relationships to those in the Auvergne and Burgundy; the closest parallel to a church in Tabor was found in a church near Le Havre, and elements in the fortification architecture could be traced to Poitou.

Yet Enlart, while stressing the architecture, also included in his publication some pieces of sculpture and objets d'art which could be related to Crusader activities; a series of brilliantly carved marble capitals from the Church of the Annunciation[123] at Nazareth set off a series of studies on Crusader sculpture, notably by Deschamps.[124] As in the field of architecture, some of the closest stylistic parallels are found in Burgundian churches, and the similarity to some capitals in Plaimpied is most striking. This is not an attempt to recapitulate the facts known about Crusader art, particularly since a comprehensive summary of research in this field, supplemented by personal observations, was published in an informative article by Boase.[125]

An entirely new basis for the history of Crusader art was created and our vision broadened when, in 1957, Buchthal published his *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*. Here, a group of manuscripts, some of them lavishly illustrated and known to scholars for a long time, was convincingly shown to be a product of Crusader artists who at first had worked in Jerusalem and later in Acre. These miniatures showed Crusader art from a new angle. While the sculpture was

119. M. H. L. Rabino, *Le Monastère de Sainte-Catherine*, Cairo, 1938, pp. 65ff.

120. Eckenstein, *op.cit.*, p. 150.

121. C. Enlart, *Les Monuments des Croisés dans le Royaume de Jérusalem, Architecture Religieuse et Civile*, Paris, 1925-1928.

122. P. P. Hugues Vincent et F. M. Abel, *Jérusalem, Recherches de Topographie, d'Archéologie et d'Histoire*, Paris, 1912-1926, and *Bethléem, Le Sanctuaire de la Nativité*, Paris, 1914.

123. *Op.cit.*, I, pp. 129ff. and pls. 131-133.

124. P. Deschamps, "La sculpture Française en Palestine et en Syrie à l'époque des Croisades," *Monuments Piot*, XXXI, 1930, pp. 91ff. and pl. X.

125. T. S. R. Boase, "The Arts in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem," *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, II, 1938-39, pp. 1ff.

French Romanesque art transplanted to another country, the miniatures were, in iconography and style, deeply influenced by good Byzantine models. In sculpture such models did not exist, so the sculptor had to depend on his own artistic training, which he had received in France before he set out for the Holy Land. As for the twelfth century Melisende Psalter, Buchthal[126] demonstrated that its illustrator, by the name of Basilius, was, despite his Greek name, a Westerner, who had come in contact with Byzantine art and had embarked on making quite precise imitations of Byzantine works. However, in the thirteenth century, especially in the manuscripts of the second half, when Acre was the center, the situation changed, since the Crusader artists no longer merely imitated Byzantine models but were able to fuse the Byzantine tradition with their own, thus creating an art which often rises above the level of eclecticism. Artistic tensions will be noticed between the more dynamic and realistic figures, based on the Westerner's incipient observation of nature, and the more formalized and elegant figures of the Byzantines. As far as the Western sources are concerned, one of the most influential is the Bible Moralisée, that group of very luxurious manuscripts made in Paris for St. Louis and the royal court. We must assume that a Bible manuscript from the same scriptorium had actually become available to the miniature painters working in Acre. Moreover, Buchthal has clearly demonstrated that the connection with French manuscripts is by no means confined to the style and iconography of the miniatures but extends also to the script and the ornament. Thus, as in architecture and sculpture, France takes first place in supplying models for the Crusader miniaturists.

It is against this background that our group of icons must be evaluated. Their localization, as will be remembered, rests in large measure on similarities to the miniatures of the Perugia Missal, the Bible in the Arsénal Library and the *Histoire Universelle* in London, all of which are manuscripts of the Acre scriptorium. Despite a far-reaching homogeneity among the icons discussed here, two distinct stylistic trends could be recognized, one centering around the icon with the Crucifixion and the Anastasis (Figs. 5-6), which has its closest parallels in Italian painting, and therefore suggests an Italian Crusader artist as its painter, and the other centering on the wings of the triptych (Figs. 9-12), in which the connection with the Arsénal Bible is particularly strong. In this case, it seems most likely that the artist was of French origin. Since the majority of the icons we have discussed can be grouped around the triptych wings, it follows that, as a whole, the French tradition was much stronger and more decisive than the Italian. However, since the French tradition was predominant in the Crusader countries, i.e., Syria and Palestine, in all the other branches of the visual arts—Church and fortification architecture, figurative and decorative sculpture and manuscript illumination—it seems only natural that the same situation should also prevail in icon painting.

History has left us with a considerable amount of thirteenth century painting from Italy, while practically no paintings are preserved from France, although there can be no doubt that panel painting also flourished there at that time. Yet a warning must be sounded here. Even if our thesis, which holds that most Crusader icons were indeed painted by artists of French descent, is acceptable, we still would not have filled the gap of thirteenth century French panel painting. Crusader art is a special case of a conglomerate style which absorbed not only Byzantine models but also Italian and French traditions, sometimes to such an extent that it will remain difficult to determine, on the basis of style alone, the nationality of each individual artist.

The manuscripts published by Buchthal extend over a period of several generations and demonstrate that their style underwent considerable changes from the twelfth to the first half of the thirteenth century, while the artisic center was still Jerusalem, and again in the second half of the thirteenth century, when the location was changed to Acre. If, in comparison to the manuscripts, the

126. *Op.cit.*, pp. 9ff.

icons appear more homogeneous, this is merely due to the fact that, in our present preliminary study, we have confined ourselves to a single group of Crusader icons. There is no doubt that Crusader icons as a whole show as much variety and range as the miniatures; actually, most of the Crusader icons on Sinai are of a style quite different from that discussed here. A few of them were published by Sotiriou,[127] but even these do not give the total picture of this quite diversified art.

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY AND INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

127. *Op.cit.*, figs. 117-124, 194, 202.